



May 17, 2023

Sen. Margaret Rotundo, Chair
Rep. Melanie Sachs, Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations & Financial Affairs
Maine State Legislature
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: ***Letter of Support of the Governor's Change Package Part MMMM funding for water and wastewater infrastructure investments***

Dear Sen. Rotundo, Rep. Sachs, and Members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee:

The Kennebec Water District (KWD) appreciates the opportunity to provide the following testimony in strong support of Part MMMM of the Governor's Change Package for LD 258 which proposes to fund critical investments in drinking water system investments throughout our State.

KWD annually provides more than one billion gallons of drinking water to more than 9,000 customers in the communities of Waterville, Winslow, Fairfield, Benton, and Vassalboro. We also wholesale water to the community of Oakland. The treatment and delivery system to meet the needs of our customers includes more than 170 miles of buried water main, 12 million gallons of storage, three pumping stations, and a treatment plant capable of producing nearly 12 million gallons per day.

Governor Mills has submitted a "change package," which provides more than \$16 million over the biennium for water infrastructure investment. These funds will provide the necessary state match to secure federal funds from the US Environmental Protection Agency used for the replacement of aging water infrastructure around the State. For each \$1 of state match, Maine will receive \$5 in federal funds.

These funds go to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) as part of the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF). The DWSRF provides funding for public water system infrastructure improvements.

KWD has been fortunate to be the recipient of more than \$12 million in loan and grant funding packages over the past eight years through the DWSRF. Projects have included an upgrade to our primary pumping station (capable of pumping 12 million gallons of water per day) originally constructed in 1923, replacement of several miles of deteriorating water main (some installed prior to 1900), and an upgrade to the chemical storage and handling systems at our water treatment plant.

DWSRF funding subsidies (reduced interest loans and grants) have reduced the financial impact on KWD ratepayers while accelerating the infrastructure replacement rate. Consequently, KWD's infrastructure is more reliable.

The DWSRF has been amazingly successful with more than \$350 million invested in water systems across the State of Maine in the past 25 years. Congress has recently increased infrastructure funding available to states through the DWSRF. Therefore, the state match needs have increased.

We strongly urge the Committee to support Part MMMM of the Change Package so Maine can continue to provide the state match necessary to secure five times more in federal funds to support water infrastructure investments.

Yours for safe drinking water,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Roger Crouse". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Roger Crouse,
General Manager

Ec: Representatives Bruce White, Colleen Madigan, Shelly Rudnicki, and Robert Nutting,
Senator David LaFountain
Amy Stabins, KWD Board President