

Cynthia Stancioff
Camden
LD 296

Greetings Chair Tepler, Chair Doudera, and Distinguished Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee.

I submit this testimony in support of LD 296.

As a long-time volunteer lake water quality monitor on a pond in western Maine, an officer of a lake association for 12 years, and a board member of a non-profit watershed protection organization for several years, I am familiar with the challenges facing Maine's precious freshwater resources as the pace of development and of global warming accelerate.

This bill directing much needed funding to the DEP's lake water quality operations is a welcome reassurance that lawmakers understand the importance of state government support for the invaluable resources our lakes represent. Much conservation and education has been achieved through earnest citizen volunteer efforts throughout Maine, but capital comes in handy. State funding of this sort can be viewed as leveraging enormous quantities of volunteer labor. And of course, it is an investment with incalculable future returns in the form of sustained environmental integrity and economic value for the tourist economy.

We all need to remind ourselves that lake water quality degradation is in most cases irreversible, so that education and remediation of threats to water quality are extremely crucial in maintaining the resource!

I urge you to support this important bill and thank you for your time.

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