

February 24, 2025

Honorable Margaret Rotundo, Chair
Honorable Drew Gattine, Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations
& Financial Affairs
Maine State Legislature
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Honorable Henry Ingwersen, Chair
Honorable Michelle Meyer, Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human
Services
Maine State Legislature
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: **Support of LD 210 2026-2027 Biennial Budget funding The Department of Health and Human Services, Drinking Water Enforcement (Page A-325) and Limited Period Position Initiative (Page A-343)**

Dear Sen. Rotundo, Rep. Gattine, and Members of the Committee of Appropriations and Financial Affairs; Sen. Ingwersen, Rep. Meyer, and Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services:

The Maine Public Drinking Water Commission (the Commission) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the budget appropriation for the Maine Center for Disease Control's Drinking Water Program (DWP) within the Department of Health and Human Services 2026 -2027 biennial budget.

The Commission was established in 1993 by the Maine legislature (22 M.R.S. §§ 2660-B -2660-G) and is tasked with an annual evaluation of the DWP's operations, staffing requirements, funding formulas and fee collection schedule. The MPDWC appreciates the funding commitments put forward by Governor Mills in the proposed 2026-2027 biennial budget. The proposed funding supports DWP staffing and financial assistance to Maine's public water systems.


However, the DWP workload has increased dramatically in the last few years to address PFAS, lead and cybersecurity. To address these increased responsibilities, eleven limited period positions were created and funded in previous budgets using federal funding sources. The proposed biennial budget maintains these positions as limited period positions. The MPDWC asks you to consider modifying the proposed budget by converting:

The 11 **limited period positions** at Maine DWP to **full time permanent positions**. These positions would be funded using ongoing federal sources and **no state funds are needed**.

The implied temporary nature of limited period positions has made recruitment and retention difficult and does not ensure the long-term staffing levels required to meet the DWP workload. The transition of these positions from limited period to permanent will increase public health protection by ensuring the DWP can continue to meet the federal primacy requirements and the complex challenges faced by public water systems.

It is the Commission's responsibility to ask your Committees to make these limited period positions permanent.

Thank you for your consideration,



Brian Tarbuck, on behalf of the Maine Public Drinking Water Commission

cc: Maine Public Drinking Water Commission members