

Written Testimony in SUPPORT of LD 646: Resolve, Establishing the Commission to Study Unregulated Storm Water Pollution

I live in Vienna, Maine, in close proximity to Parker Pond and Minnehonk Lake, and my family owns a camp on Flying Pond, where I am a member of the Flying Pond Improvement Association Board and my husband and I are members of the Lake Smart Team and the Invasive Plant Patrol Team. I am also the representative from Vienna on the board of the 30 Mile River Watershed Association and a member of the Vienna Steering Committee on Roads and Culverts. I urge you to support LD 646, An Act to Establish the Commission to Study Unregulated Storm Water Pollution. More frequent and intense rainstorms erode soils, washing pollutants - which may include bacteria, pesticides, toxic chemicals, and excess nutrients - from across the watershed into lakes, rivers and streams. The devastating storms of 2023 resulted in washouts in multiple roads in Vienna that flowed directly into Flying Pond or Parker Pond, with visible plumes of road materials and debris in the ponds. We are fortunate that 30 Mile has been helping Vienna and the other towns and lake associations in our watershed to address the sources of stormwater pollution and look for solutions, but the problem is steadily growing and beyond the capacity of individual organizations to address. We have already seen an algal bloom in Lake Androscoggin for several years in a row, and people whose families have had camps there since the 19th century are thinking of leaving. We need a statewide approach to address this issue, and the first step is to establish a commission to study the problem so that action to protect our waters can be proposed in next year's first legislative session. This is critical to the people, wildlife, recreational activities, and economy of our beautiful state.