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**March 3, 2025**

**Testimony of Meghan Russo  
Maine Department of Transportation  
Before the 132<sup>nd</sup> Legislature, Environment and Natural Resources Committee**

**In Opposition to LD 646**

*Resolve, Establishing the Commission to Study Unregulated Storm Water Pollution*

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera and distinguished members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, I am Meghan Russo, Director of Government Affairs at MaineDOT. MaineDOT is in opposition to LD 646.

LD 646 proposes to establish a commission to study how to address unregulated stormwater pollution with commission findings and suggested legislation to be summarized in a report and submitted to the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources by December 3, 2025.

MaineDOT opposes LD 646 because it seeks to create a duplicative process. Stormwater standards are currently regulated by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) rules, and can specifically be found in Chapter 500. Chapter 500 describes stormwater standards for activities licensed under the State's Stormwater Management Law and Site Location of Development Law. These rules also regulate the conditions under which discharges of stormwater to groundwater are exempt from licensing under the Waste Discharge Law.

The Chapter 500 Stormwater Rule Stakeholder process is currently taking place. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has just finished convening Steering and Technical Committees made up of public and private entities to work together to develop a consensus-based framework for improving the State's stormwater regulations, specifically Chapter 500, all while considering the State's environmental protection and climate adaptation goals. The Steering and Technical Committees, along with stakeholders and members of the public have dedicated time and effort to attend numerous meetings and provide substantive feedback to DEP as they move into the rulemaking phase.

The commission proposed within LD 646 limits commission representation to one representative of municipal government and does not include industry stakeholders. This will result in a less robust process than is currently ongoing.

The formation of a Commission will duplicate and undermine the effort of an existing, well-attended public process, exclude the voices of well-informed pertinent parties and disregard the numerous laws that currently regulate stormwater discharge. We urge the committee to vote ought not to pass on LD 646.

Thank you.

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