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Maine's Rural Development Council

**Testimony of Nancy Smith, CEO of GrowSmart Maine
in support of LD 646 Resolve, Establishing the Commission to Study
Unregulated Storm Water Pollution**

March 3, 2025

Senator Templer, Representative Doudera, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources.

My name is Nancy Smith, I live in Ellsworth, and I am the CEO of GrowSmart Maine. We are a statewide non-partisan non-profit organization helping communities navigate change in alignment with smart growth.

GrowSmart advocates for development that is sited and designed to contribute to a sense of community, rather than the sense of isolation created by development patterns over the past sixty years.

As a new member of Maine's Environmental Priorities Coalition, we support this bill from the perspective of smart growth; implementing development and conservation strategies that value Maine's communities, environment, and economy. When we plan well for development, all aspects of Maine's quality of life thrive. This commission will provide data, context, and prioritized strategies to address unregulated storm water pollution that puts all of that at risk.

In reference to increased urbanization language in Section 5 Number 4 of the bill, it is important to note that poorly designed development plans with excessive impervious surfaces create problems in urban, suburban, and rural settings. Minimizing impervious surfaces in development plans is significantly more cost effective than trying later to address the impacts of stormwater runoff.

This resolve creates a Stormwater Study Commission to evaluate current laws, and recommend new strategies to prevent and treat stormwater pollution. The January 2026 report back date allows this Legislature to take action once this foundational work is complete.

