

Dear Representative Campbell,

I am writing in support of LD 430- An Act to Impose Moratoria on Hydropower Dam Removal and on Water release from Non-hydropower Dams and to Make Other Changes to the Laws regulating Such Dams.

Our community is currently embroiled in a debate regarding the removal of Montgomery Dam at the mouth of the Megunticook River. As you likely know, this dam is an historic landmark which creates a stunning waterfall that visitors flock to each year. It is arguably one of the most photographed features of our lovely town of Camden.

Town officials have pursued and secured grant funding for removal of the dam without permitting a referendum to be placed on the ballot, even with the appropriate number of legally obtained signatures from concerned residents. They have controlled the narrative by cherry picking portions of the engineering report, claiming that dam removal is necessary to prevent flooding and to provide fish passage. The report states clearly that the dam poses no flooding risk, and to provide fish passage will require blasting of existing, centuries old bedrock. For centuries, fish have not been traveling upstream from this outlet. Additionally, removal of several other dams upstream will be necessary for fish passage. Taxpayers have not been fully apprised of the costs that will entail when grant funding is depleted and maintenance of fish ladders falls on the town.

Lastly, town officials have not adequately engaged stakeholders along the river and above the dam during this process. I own a building and business which sits atop the millpond. The building will likely be damaged by the blasting of bedrock, dredging of sediment beneath the pilings of my building, as well as changing the direction of the water flow which will expose my building to the elements. The financial impact for myself, my business, my employees and other stakeholders will be substantial. There are no current plans to compensate us for our losses.

LD 430 will provide time for myself and other opponents of dam removal to explore alternative options, rally community support and consider next steps. It also requires an evaluation of negative outcomes for property and business owners, something our town has demonstrated a callous disregard for to date.

Thank you for your time and your sponsorship of this very important bill.

Sincerely,

Tom Rothwell (owner, Camden Deli and longtime Camden resident)

Thomas Rothwell
Camden
LD 430

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