

April 7, 2025

Testimony in Opposition to 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”

I am Richard Lawrence Jr., a resident of Benton, Maine for 55 years, currently residing in Brunswick, Maine. I was a Selectman, Treasurer, Assessor and Alewife Warden from 1980 until my retirement in 2024. During my years in town government, I oversaw rebuilding of the Essex Hydro Dam in the 1980s and the construction of effective fish passage there. Upon removal of the Fort Halifax dam in 2009, river herring returned to the Sebasticook River. The Town has profited from annual fish harvesting, regulated by the Maine Department of Marine Resources. Benton has earned over \$595,000 since 2009 from the fish harvest. Dozens of lobstermen have also profited. Millions of fish, over 6.5 million last season, have successfully passed over the dam to spawn. We celebrate their return with an annual Alewife Festival drawing tourism and widespread notice.

Dam construction has been beneficial. Fish passage has benefited the river and its residents. Removal of the downstream dams in Augusta and Winslow have also been beneficial. Sufficient laws and regulations guide the State of Maine. The DEP and other agencies function properly in the timely and judicious consideration of dam licensing, re-licensing and

removal. Enactment of LD 430 accomplishes nothing and adds, however temporary, complications for municipalities, commercial and individual property owners. There is no "Emergency."

Thank you for your consideration.