

Jessica Ives  
Camden  
LD 430

Dear Representative Campbell and Committee Members,

We are 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.

The historic, beloved, and unique Montgomery Dam and Falls at the head of Camden Harbor is at risk of being destroyed. We live and run two businesses in a building directly adjacent to the falls and provide witness of what can go wrong in a municipality and a community when there is an irrational push to remove a dam. The claim is a common one — removal will “restore” the river to its “natural state” — but where were the concrete fish ladders on the Megunticook River before settlers arrived on these shores? Why would it be necessary to blast bedrock to return the river to an alleged original state? The real issue behind dam removal is money, and in its Captain Ahab-like pursuit of federal grants we have watched the Town of Camden collude with those acting as state agents in order to manipulate report findings, make false claims, and propagandize residents. The town is brow-beating its people to remove a historic and a place-defining landmark, the Montgomery Dam and Falls, in order to secure money that will be used for all sorts of tangential infrastructure issues — seawall repair, high-hazard dam repair further up-river, stormwater drainage issues, and even work in an affordable housing development that was poorly engineered and then neglected by the Town. In fact, it is the Town of Camden’s rush to catch culturally and politically fashionable waves without following through on the responsibility to “evaluate options for implementation of processes, programs or initiatives to address negative outcomes that may be experienced” as articulated in Sec. 10 of LD 430 that repeatedly results in failed or failing municipal projects in Camden. Should LD 430 pass it would provide the men and women of Camden time to hold local officials accountable about: the lack of flood risk caused by the Montgomery Dam; the Town of Camden’s as-of-yet inadequate engagement of stakeholders, especially business owners currently stilted over the dam, and property owners like our landlord who will suffer damage due to bedrock blasting and sediment dredging; the possibility and environmental impact of invasive fish species entering the river and lake via artificial fish-passage; and finally, the true cost to taxpayers of dam removal and “river restoration” should federal funding be depleted or deleted mid-project.

Thank you for your attention to this very important bill.

Sincerely,

Jessica Lee Ives

Jonathan Ives

Proudly living and doing business in Camden

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