
To: Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs

From: Bradley Sawyer, Deputy Director

Date: April 10, 2025

Re: In Support of L.D. 25, An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Fund Wastewater Treatment Facility Planning and Construction of Infrastructure Projects

On behalf of the Maine Rural Water Association, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of L.D. 25, “An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Fund Wastewater Treatment Facility Planning and Construction of Infrastructure Projects.”

As an organization dedicated to supporting Maine’s water and wastewater systems, MRWA serves as a vital partner to municipalities, quasi-municipal entities, and unorganized townships. Our members are often on the front lines of ensuring clean drinking water and effective wastewater management for communities that face significant financial and operational challenges.

This legislation proposes a \$50 million investment through a General Fund bond issue to assist these communities with the planning and construction of critical wastewater treatment infrastructure. These funds will help address a pressing and widespread need across our state.

Small and rural communities often lack the resources to upgrade aging infrastructure or meet modern environmental and public health standards. Many wastewater treatment systems in Maine are decades old, and deferred maintenance can lead to system failures, pollution of waterways, and increased costs over time. Moreover, with the growing complexities of managing wastewater sludge and biosolids, utilities need help to comply with evolving regulatory requirements.

The grants made possible by this legislation will:

- Provide targeted financial relief for communities that struggle to fund large capital improvements on their own.
- Support compliance with state and federal environmental regulations, including responsible management of biosolids.
- Protect Maine’s rivers, lakes, and coastal waters by improving the quality and reliability of wastewater treatment systems.
- And stimulate local economies by supporting jobs in planning, engineering, and construction.

MRWA regularly works with communities that would directly benefit from the assistance L.D. 25 provides. We see firsthand how investments in infrastructure lead to healthier communities, cleaner water, and long-term cost savings. Passage of this bond issue is not just a fiscal matter—it is an investment in public health, environmental protection, and the economic resilience of Maine’s rural communities.

We respectfully urge this Committee and the full Legislature to support L.D. 25 and to send it to the voters in November. Maine’s water and wastewater infrastructure needs are urgent, and this legislation is a crucial step toward addressing them. Thank you for your time and your commitment to Maine’s future.