

Robert Capers
Fayette
LD 1550

My name is Bob Capers and I coordinate surveys for invasive aquatic plants for the Basin, David, Tilton Pond Association in Fayette, where I live. I am a plant biologist by training, and before retiring, I spent several years working on lakes in Connecticut, focusing especially on water quality issues and invasive aquatic plants. I saw first-hand the problems that can result when lakes and ponds have artificially high levels of nutrients because of failing septic systems and runoff from roads and lawns around lakeshore homes. Septic systems are designed to prevent bacteria from infecting humans living nearby. They were never designed to prevent the release of nutrients into nearby waterbodies. The legislation you are considering, LD 1550, would help keep nutrients like phosphorus from entering lakes and ponds, where they encourage the growth of algae and aquatic plants. Much attention has been given to the problem of invasive aquatic plants, but even native aquatic plants will become nuisances if they are fertilized by nutrients released from old or poorly designed septic systems. It's the super-abundance of plants, when they reach unnatural densities in our waters, that are the real problem. This legislation would take an important step toward reducing the fertilization of our lakes and ponds, which causes algae blooms and the unnatural abundance of vascular aquatic plants, both native and non-native. I encourage you to vote in favor of this legislation, and I thank you for considering this important issue.