



April 15, 2025

**Re: Support for LD 1550: "Resolve, Directing the Department of Health and Human Services to Amend Its Rules to Protect Water Quality by Reducing Nutrient Pollution from Septic Systems"**

Dear Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Committee on Health and Human Services,

My name is Colin Holme and I am the Executive Director of the Lakes Environmental Association (LEA). Our organization has over 1300 members and a direct service area that covers 41 lakes in the upper Sebago Lake Region of western Maine. We regularly monitor the lakes in this area, implement aquatic invasive plant control and prevention programs, provide school and adult-based watershed education, and we offer technical assistance and planning services to landowners and towns regarding stormwater and wastewater management.

I am writing today to urge your Committee and the Maine Legislature to address an issue that is impacting water quality and the health and well-being of Maine residents and visitors. This issue is referred to as "septic system short circuiting".

This occurs when wastewater from a leach field moves through the soil and into the groundwater or an adjacent waterbody untreated.

While most Maine soils do a good job of removing pollutants from wastewater, soils that are made up of coarse sand and gravel do little to treat pathogens and nutrients that are in household wastewater. Leach fields on top of fractured bedrock with only sand and gravel between the system and the underlying rock also offer little treatment.

LD 1550 addresses this issue by preventing new systems from being installed on highly porous soils near the water table. This will help ensure that harmful bacteria from our wastewater does not get into our drinking water. It was also help limit nutrients like phosphorus and nitrogen, which can cause algae blooms, from getting into our lakes, ponds, rivers, and marine waters.

**For these reasons, I urge you to vote "ought to pass" on LD 1550.**

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Colin Holme". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Colin Holme  
Executive Director  
Lakes Environmental Association

