

Richard Warren
Freeport
LD 1763

Dear Sen. Baldacci, Rep. Roberts, and IFWC Members: I am writing to voice my full support for LD 1763, legislation to ban Floating Camps on Maine lakes. Here is why I believe these structures should be banned:

Issues & concerns re: Risk's To Lakes from Floating Camps.

Littoral Habitat: Shallow, near-shore habitat is essential for Maine's fish and other aquatic life, providing feeding and breeding areas as well as cover and shelter. NWFS moored in shallow waters may damage these fragile aquatic habitats, altering fish habitat by shading out plant growth that is essential for feeding and reproduction. They may also change water temperatures and dissolved oxygen levels, impacting fish and other aquatic life.

Sewage: Sewage, human waste, and greywater pose a risk to public health, water quality, and wildlife. The risks posed by NWFS either leaking sewage (with substandard plumbing) or discharging directly into lakes are high and are not acceptable on our publicly owned Great Ponds. Assuring houseboats meet standards for waste management is an important piece of LD 1763.

Equitable Access: Access to our public waterways is an essential right. While one or two NWFS on a lake may not feel like a big deal, without statewide regulation the scale and range of NWFS will continue to grow. More NWFS create the potential for growing conflicts over access, as well as further degradations to lake water quality and potential negative impacts to our vital outdoor industries.

Uniform Regulations: Stress and tension have grown among towns as some towns have created ordinances prohibiting NWFS, resulting in shifts of NWFS to parts of lakes in neighboring towns. A uniform state regulation will lessen the regulatory burden on towns and eliminate a piece-meal approach that is confusing, while also providing equitable lake protection and access across the state.

Rulemaking: LD 1763 includes a provision for rulemaking around additional exceptions and clarifications, which we believe will be important given the complexity of the bill and the challenge in clearly defining NWFS.

Respectfully,
Rick Warren
Freeport, Maine