

Dear Members of the Maine State Legislature,

LD 1382: An Act Regarding Dam Repair

Sponsored by: Representative Nina Milliken (Blue Hill)

Co-sponsored by: Representative Steven Bishop (Bucksport)

Senator Nicole Grohoski (Hancock)

Senator David Hagan (Penobscot)

Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee

I am submitting this statement in strong support of the above mentioned piece of legislation. As a property owner on Toddy Pond, in Orland Maine, I am very familiar with the challenges many communities and lake associations face in maintaining dams which in many cases are over 100 years old. Although in many cases, removal of such old structures is the best path forward, in many other cases preservation of these dams and the bodies of water they impound is the more appropriate action. Over their lifespans, these dams have created unique ecosystems with the attendant wildlife populations thriving in and around the water bodies created and maintained by the dam. Additionally vibrant communities have developed along and around these bodies of water. These lakes and ponds have provided these communities and the regions abutting them with economic and recreational benefits which would be impossible to replace. Finally, in an era of climate change, it behooves the State to preserve any and all sources of fresh water which can provide water for drinking supplies and fire suppression.

Despite these valuable benefits, the cost of maintaining, repairing and/or improving these impoundments is often beyond the reach of local municipalities or lake associations. This legislation would facilitate the local ownership and maintenance of these structures so vital to our communities. Additionally, it would enhance public safety by facilitating repair and maintenance of “high risk” dams such as the ones on Toddy Pond and Alamoosook Lake.

By creating a fund which would provide loans to the communities and organizations owning and maintaining these dams, this legislation would provide all of the benefits listed above in a way which minimizes the cost to the State.

For these reasons, I strongly support this legislation.

Respectfully

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