

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Sara Gagné-Holmes
Commissioner



Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
11 State House Station
286 Water Street
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
Tel; (207) 287-8016; Fax (207) 287-2887
TTY: Dial 711 (Maine Relay)

4/29/2025

Senator Tepler, Chair
Representative Doudera, Chair
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: LD 757 – *Resolve, to Study and Oversee Water in the State of Maine*

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, thank you for the opportunity to provide information in opposition to LD 757, *Resolve, to Study and Oversee Water in the State of Maine*.

LD 757 establishes the Commission to Study the Role of Water as a Resource in the State to develop findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation to ensure adequate clean, safe and accessible drinking water for the State's residents and to meet the needs of commercial and business interests. It also requires the Maine Public Drinking Water Commission adopt major substantive rules regarding the transfer of a permit or contract in a sale of assets of an entity engaged in the exporting of water from the State.

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention Drinking Water Program is fully committed to ensuring the availability of safe drinking water to all Maine residents. However, placing the task of developing water bottling regulations on the Maine Drinking Water Commission is not in line with the purpose of the Drinking Water Commission. The Drinking Water Commission was established by 5 MRSA § 12004-I sub§ 47-C and authorized by the Maine Water for Human Consumption Act, 22 MRSA § 2660 for the purposes of:

- Evaluating the Drinking Water Program's enforcement of the Rules Relating to Drinking Water for public water systems;
- Providing recommendations on administrative actions; and
- Determining funding and fee collection necessary to meet Drinking Water Program workloads, staffing and resource requirements.

The group of volunteers that make up the Drinking Water Commission are not specifically versed in water resource law and do not have the resources to take on the development of major substantive rules. Maine CDC and Maine's Department of Environmental Protection align on this position, and Maine CDC requests that this provision be removed from the bill if it is to be enacted. Additionally, Maine CDC calls attention to the Water Resources Planning Commission, established by 22 MRS § 6401 with the focus of planning for the sustainable use of Maine's waters and whose work is very similar to that sought by this bill, comprised of a robust membership and reconstituted in 2019.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions during your deliberation of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anthony Va".

Puthiery Va
Director
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
Maine Department of Health and Human Services