

Testimony of Hon. Jessica Fay of Raymond
In Support of LD 1763
An Act to Regulate Non-Water-dependent Floating Structures on
Maine's Waters

Honorable Members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee,

Please accept this testimony in favor of LD 1763. I served in the Legislature during the 128-131st Legislatures. Four of those years were spent on the Environment and Natural Resources Committee and two on the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee.

I am currently on the Board of Directors of Raymond Waterways, though not speaking for Raymond Waterways. Our organization expends significant time and effort helping homeowners protect water quality for all of us. What we have learned is it is much easier to prevent damage to our lakes than it is to clean it up.

One of the first bills I introduced in the 128th Legislature, LD 357 “ An Act To Create a Penalty for the Discharge of Septic Waste from Watercraft into the Inland Waters” was a bill that increased the fine for dumping human waste in our water. This bill was a response to complaints that some boaters were improperly disposing of the waste from their day or overnight trips. This was the first, but not the last bill that was a response to multiple complaints from users of Maine’s lakes and ponds about both nuisance and threats to water quality and wildlife. I had no idea how complex these issues would be - and how unequipped Maine’s regulatory structure was to deal with some cross jurisdictional concerns.

I applaud the follow through of DIFW, DAFW and DEP as well as Rep. Hepler for taking the work begun by the Hon. Paul Stearns four years ago and creating a way to protect our water and the rights of all Maine people to use on and in clean water. This is such a great example of how we want our government to work - by taking the time to understand the problem and to craft a solution that takes into account stakeholder input and the importance of implementability.

I am encouraged by the bi-partisan list of co-sponsors for this bill and am hopeful that you will work to include suggested amendments and pass LD 1763 in order to protect water quality that is so important to our traditional way of life. Thank you all for your work this session. I am grateful to each one of you for putting in the time it takes to do this job.