

Testimony by Larry Grondin in opposition of LD 1822, Resolve, Directing the Department of Environmental Protection to Conduct Rulemaking Regarding Significant Vernal Pools

Senator Chair Tepler, House Chair Doudera, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environmental & Natural Resources. My name is Larry Grondin and I am the President of R. J. Grondin & Sons, a fourth-generation, family-owned earth excavation company going into our 66th year of doing business in Gorham, Maine. We employ anywhere from 130 -150 men and women in any given year, many of which have worked for our family for 20 and 30+ years.

I'm writing today to ask that you consider opposing LD 1822, Resolve, Directing the Department of Environmental Protection to Conduct Rulemaking Regarding Significant Vernal Pools. There have been updates to this law as recent as 2023. More importantly, I was in the hallways of the state house when this bill became law and I was opposing it then. We was told at the time that "there aren't very many vernal pools in the state – we just wan to protect the big ones." That was misguided at best. I've been on dozens, if not hundreds of projects that have had negative affects as a direct result of this 20 year old law. Some of the proposed language will restrict options for land owners and thus flexibility while still trying to meet the intent of the species protections – I don't think that's right.

Even more concerning to me is the proposed language is trying to change future changes from major substantive rule making to routine and technical. These rules should remain major substantive rules. I think the regulated community has had to put up with this law for the past 20 years – never have I heard from law makers, planning board members or municipalities that these laws are restrictive enough.

Please consider opposing LD 1822. Doing business in Maine is already hard enough with all the barriers we tend to put on ourselves. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Larry Grondin