

Good afternoon. My name is Alex Buechner, and I am a superintendent of the Ogunquit Sewer District. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today regarding the proposal to increase the district's debt limit.

I am here in support of increasing the sewer district's debt limit because this action is necessary to fund critical infrastructure upgrades that protect public health and the environment.

Much of our sewer infrastructure is aging and was built decades ago. Like many systems across the state, it now requires significant capital investment to meet current environmental standards, prevent system failures and prepare for rising sea levels as well as the increased costs of equipment and construction.

In 2023 the District's engineering consultant identified 15.1 million dollars of upgrades to the District's assets, some of which has been completed or are in the process of being completed. Since 2023, tariffs, inflation, and other factors have resulted in increased costs for all goods and services, including long-term infrastructure construction projects.

The existing debt limit restricts the district's ability to finance these long-term improvements responsibly, even when projects are clearly justified and planned.

Increasing the debt limit allows the district to:

- Spread the cost of major infrastructure projects over time
- Match repayment with the useful life of the assets
- Avoid sharp, sudden rate increases for customers

Without adequate borrowing authority, the alternative is often deferred maintenance or emergency repairs, both of which are more expensive and disruptive in the long run.

The district will continue to use debt prudently, with appropriate oversight, transparency, and long-term financial planning. Increasing the debt limit simply provides the flexibility needed to manage infrastructure responsibly.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the state to approve the increase in the sewer district's debt limit. Doing so is a proactive, fiscally sound step that will help safeguard our community now and into the future.

Thank you for your time and consideration.