Jeremy Smith
Wayne, Maine
Pocasset Lake Association & 30 Mile River Watershed
Re: LD 2141

January 30, 2026

Dear Chair Tepler, Chair Doudera, and esteemed members of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources,

I am writing today in support of LD 2141 to fund efforts to develop new systems to monitor and protect Maine's environmental areas. As a year-round Maine resident, life-long fisherman, member of the Board of Directors of 30 Mile River Watershed Association, and Pocasset Lake Association Board, I have been looking at the impacts of projects like stormwater culvert replacements, potential phosphorus-reduction treatments, and watershed surveys for several years.

The proposal of LD 2141 would take $2,000,000 from unclaimed can and bottle deposits and place it in the Quality Restoration and Protection Fund. (Another $2,000,000 would go to a fund for the protection of working farmland). With the potential passage of LD 2141, one important positive outcome would be to fund an increase in Maine DEP staff, in order to effectively monitor watersheds with a greater capacity. This increase in staffing would result in the ability to complete a greater number of watershed surveys and road erosion studies for towns and unorganized territories.

All of the work that would be funded under LD 2141 would benefit taxpayers by helping to uphold the water quality and environmental standards that we need in order to preserve and protect the current ecological balance of native plants in our lake, river, and pond ecosystems.

As Maine has over 32,000 miles of rivers and streams as well as over 6,000 lakes and ponds covering more than a million acres of our state, it is tremendously clear that we need to do what is possible to preserve these areas and deter any threats in the foreseeable future.

Some of the issues experienced in Maine's lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, and watersheds are regionally-known but I would argue that the creation of a larger and more comprehensive monitoring system to compile and track data would result in a more universal approach to studying impacts like phosphorus-loading, erosion, algal blooms, invasive plants, septic runoff and other significant impacts on our watersheds.

We need a more comprehensive system to aid in protecting a bright future for our local environment. We need to protect what we hold most dear.

Thanks very much for your time,

Jeremy Smith