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LD 2141

Testimony to support LD 2141, ENR Committee

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Hello,

I am Kathryn Cain. I am fortunate to live on Thompson Lake, one of Maine's pristine lakes.

I am a member of the board of directors of the Thompson Lake Environmental Association (TLEA) and I strongly support the LD 2141, which would direct funds from unclaimed bottle deposits towards protection and restoration of Maine lakes.

During my years with TLEA I have served as co-president/president for 15 years of those years, participating in our many environmental and educational programs. Our programs can be costly. We generate funds through our memberships and grants. This bill would provide an additional source for funding.

Our mission at TLEA is to protect the natural beauty, water quality and biologic diversity of the lake. We have over 500 members and our programs include invasive species mitigation, a courtesy boat inspection service, a 319 Grant program for erosion control, a Youth Conservation Corps, water quality monitoring and educational outreach programs. Over the past decade we have eliminated 600 tons of milfoil from the lake. All these programs rely on funds from membership dues, donations and grants.

As an example, Thompson Lake is listed as a "threatened" lake by the Maine DEP because of erosion from shoreline development. We have an active federal 319 program which we have used to significantly reduce erosion from erosion sites we recently identified with a watershed survey. Unfortunately, we were informed this year that because of federal cuts, the Maine DEP is suspending the 319 Grant program. LD 2141 could allow us to continue this type of work.

LD 2141 would provide sustainability for programs like ours that protect the wonderful lakes that make Maine special.