

Todd Hemphill

Flying Pond Improvement Association; 30 Mile River Watershed Association
LD 2141

My wife and I are not year-round residents of Maine, but we own a camp on Flying Pond in Mount Vernon. It was built by her parents in the late 60's. I have been coming to the camp for over 45 years, and she has been coming here virtually her whole life. Our children grew up playing on Flying Pond every summer, a tradition which they now share with their children. Since we retired in 2019, my wife and I spend our entire summers at the camp. We have become part of the Mount Vernon and Vienna communities, making many friends and supporting local businesses, nonprofits and other community organizations. Our property taxes support the services Mount Vernon provides to permanent and summer residents alike.

I am offering this testimony in support of LD 2141, which will, among other things, provide \$2,000,000 from unclaimed can and bottle deposits every year and place it in the Lake Quality Restoration and Protection Fund. As a long-time visitor and now resident, I have seen how the growth in Flying Pond's popularity has impacted the clarity and cleanliness of its water. I have been a volunteer Courtesy Boat Inspector on the pond for several years, and fortunately the work of volunteers on the pond has helped keep invasive species out of our water. But Maine lakes are undoubtedly beginning to suffer due to their popularity. The steady source of income from this fund will help local communities to protect the lake water for the people and wildlife who depend on it. For these reasons, I urge the Committee to support passage of LD 2141.