

Bruce Burnham
Greater Pushaw Lake Association
LD 2141

February 4, 2026^[1]
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Greetings to Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee. Re: LD 2141

Thank you for offering this opportunity for those concerned about the present and future of Maine's many lakes to advocate for LD 2141. I am Bruce Burnham (of Old Town), current president of the Greater Pushaw Lake Association (GPLA), which tests and educates for Pushaw Lake, an 8 mile long shallow water lake, and Little Pushaw Pond, upstream of the Pushaw Lake inlet. The lakes system involves four municipalities - Hudson, Glenburn, Orono, and Old Town, and we report to these annually about our work. These four combine to give us a little more than \$2000 a year to have our volunteers conduct regular tests for water clarity, phosphorus and dissolved oxygen content, and send out 2 newsletters a year to report and educate on the health of our lakes to every landowner around the lakes. My family has been vacationing on and enjoying Pushaw Lake for more than 100 years, and I've learned more and more about lake health since I joined the GPLA Board in 2018. I also have two cousins who are lakefront owners here and share these concerns.

These tests have been showing that water quality in the Pushaws is being challenged. Phosphorus levels are moderately high in Little Pushaw, and challengingly high in Pushaw. Should an algae bloom happen here, the lake will become virtually unusable for a period of time for people and pets, and wild animals, and there could be fish kill-offs as well through oxygen depletion. In the longer term, land values could be affected as resale values go down knowing these blooms can return year by year.

The financial resources that passing LD2141 could represent will be of great assistance to lake associations at the state and regional level. Better inspection and education is crucial to keeping our lakes clean by educating owners and those who use our lakes recreationally, and the people of Maine as a whole. Using unredeemed bottle deposits is an "everybody wins" situation for Maine people as there is no cost to us as taxpayers.

I, and the GPLA board, hope you will vote to pass this bill onto the full legislature so that "Vacationland" can continue to benefit residents and attract tourism well into the future. My thanks for your work for our State, and thanks from our Board of Directors as well.

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