

Janet and Vic Bernhards
Androscoggin Lake, seasonal residents (Wayne)
LD 2141

Dear Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of LD 2141, "An Act to Direct a Portion of Unclaimed Bottle Deposits to the Lake Water Quality Restoration and Protection Fund..."

Our family has owned shorefront property on Androscoggin Lake since 1956. We've enjoyed spending vacations and even full summers into fall there. We are members of ALIC, Androscoggin's lake association, and we also have a loon raft we made and launch in our cover every year since 1984. We are members of a volunteer team that surveys the lake for invasive plants.

We have seen two major threats to our lake in the last several years. One is invasive milfoil, located directly across from us; the other is algae blooms, the worst of which we have ever seen this past year. Both of these threaten the very existence of the lake. We are attaching pictures (second and third page) to this testimony in case you haven't seen any. The most telling is the picture taken from an airplane, showing the clarity of Lake Poccasset, compared to the slimy green of Androscoggin Lake. The conditions of the lake have impacted tourism—people can't partake in several water activities, and many residents on our road alone have had to cancel time spent at their properties. This has an effect on the economy—not to mention our property values—and the town; if not addressed, it will only get worse over time.

While our lake association (about 175 members) is actively involved in taking action to protect the lake, the association relies on donations from members or fundraising. We need the help of the state of Maine and hope it will enact LD 2141 into law. We need to protect this resource that is valuable to the community and to the state before it is too late.

Thank you.
Janet & Vic Bernhards



