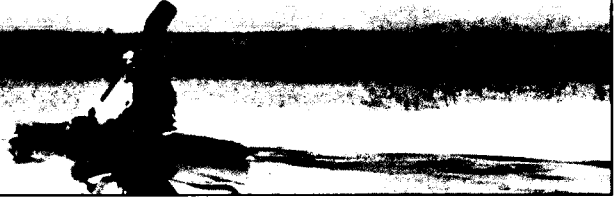


# Lakes Environmental Association

*Protecting Maine's lakes since 1970*



March 21, 2023

**Re: Support for LD 693: "An Act to Protect Inland Water Quality, Shorelines, Wildlife and Public Safety by Prohibiting Operation of a Wake Boat to Create an Enhanced Wake Close to Shore or in Shallow Water "**

Dear Senator LaFountain, Representative Landry, and distinguished members of the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife,

My name is Colin Holme and I am the Director of the Lakes Environmental Association. Our organization is headquartered in Bridgton, Maine and we directly work on waterbodies in the upper Sebago and Saco River watersheds. We regularly work with the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, and statewide lake groups on a variety of freshwater issues. We are financially supported by over 1300 members and our programs include water quality monitoring, aquatic invasives control and prevention, in-school and public education, and technical assistance for landowners, businesses, and municipalities.

Each summer, our organization receives dozens and dozens of calls, emails, and personal pleas regarding the impact of wake surf boats on the environment and people's experience on nearby lakes.

Creating a very large, surfable, wake on a lake or pond is inherently different from other types of lake activities and is changing how people enjoy and use Maine lakes. **Our organization is not opposed to the sport of wake surfing but we strongly feel that this activity needs to be done in a way that will not have harmful consequences on water quality, wildlife, other lake users, or waterfront land owners.**

Large wakes created by very powerful boats near the shore can have a negative impact on the environment, particularly in shallow waters. These wakes cause bank erosion, re-suspend the nutrient phosphorus from bottom sediments, disturb fish habitat, and flood loon and duck nests.

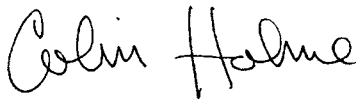
Large wakes from this sport can also damage docks, boats, and other property along the shoreline. This can be expensive to repair and can disrupt the enjoyment of the waterfront for property owners.



Additionally, these large and unpredictable waves can be dangerous to swimmers, kayakers, and other watercraft. By prohibiting the creation of enhanced wakes within 500 feet of the shoreline or in waters less than 20 feet deep, this bill can help prevent unintended accidents and injuries.

Simply enjoying this activity more than 500 feet from the shore and in deeper water, eliminates most of the problems associated with this new sport. For this reason, our organization feels this bill proposes reasonable restrictions on wake surfing so that everyone can continue to enjoy our precious and irreplaceable lakes and ponds.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. **I encourage you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 693.**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Colin Holme". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Colin Holme  
Executive Director  
Lakes Environmental Association