



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION & FORESTRY
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
22 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

AMANDA E. BEAL
COMMISSIONER

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST LD 1441

An Act to Enhance State Oversight of Water Use and Water Resources

April 10, 2023

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Pluecker, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, my name is Judy East, and I am the Director of the Bureau of Resource Information and Land Use Planning. I will be speaking on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF), neither for nor against LD 1441, *An Act to Enhance State Oversight of Water Use and Water Resources*.

This legislation would expand the role of two existing entities – the Water Resources Planning Committee (WRPC) and the Maine Agricultural Water Management Board (AWMB) – to further address water resources used for human consumption, industry, and agricultural purposes. Both the WRPC and AWMB are under the purview of DACF.

The 2022 Commission to Study the Role of Water as a Resource in the State of Maine recommended consolidating water information currently accessible through four agencies. This legislation will examine data centralization for improved public access while looking for funding opportunities to expand and improve information on water resources across Maine.

The legislation also requires the WRPC and AWMB to identify better practices that could help sustain water supplies in droughts. They are to examine better methods of collecting, enhancing, and interpreting water use and report findings back to the legislature and state agencies annually. Both the WRPC and AWMB are already working to develop strategies to meet drought challenges, improve preparedness, and enhance resilience. We recognize that greater collaboration and coordination between these two entities could result in sharing positive and more widely-recognized results.

Thank you for your time. I would be happy to answer any questions now or at the work session with State Geologist Stephen Dickson or MGS Hydrogeologist Ryan Gordon for technical assistance.

HARLOW BUILDING
18 ELKINS LANE
AUGUSTA, MAINE



PHONE: (207) 287-3200
FAX: (207) 287-2400
WEB: WWW.MAINE.GOV/DACF