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**Testimony on
L.D. 173, "An Act to Exempt Certain Watercraft from Registration
Requirements"**

**Presented by
Representative Stephen J. Wood
District 92**

Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee
Monday, February 10, 2025

Good afternoon, Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts, and fellow members of the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife:

I am State Representative Stephen J. Wood, and I proudly represent District 92, Greene and Sabattus. It is an honor to appear before you today for the purpose of introducing L.D. 173, "**An Act to Exempt Certain Watercraft from Registration Requirements.**"

This bill started as a bill for a constituent who is semi-disabled and who can no longer paddle his canoe as far as he would like. He has to use an electric motor on his canoe to get to the places he likes to fish. However, in talking to people, there are many who would like to see this bill pass.

This past session, this Committee raised the boat registration fees to the point where it is going to hurt a lot of people. I spoke with four different guides who run lodges that have as many as 12 boats/canoes that they register every year, along with several older people who just register their rowboat for their grandkids that come a few weekends in the summer and use an electric motor to go fishing.

I started this bill to be just for electric motors with a less than 100 lbs. of thrust, but I have been asked to include gas powered motors of 2.5 hp or smaller, which have a thrust of 80 to 85 lbs. A three hp motor is over 100 lbs. of thrust, so that would be the justification for not including those.

I know this will be a hit to the Department, but this Committee has raised the price of registering a boat way too much. As an alternative to the full exemption from registration proposed above, if the Committee would agree to an amendment to make the registration for a canoe, kayak, or row boat with an electric motor or gas-powered motor of 5hp \$10 or \$15, I believe that would be more palatable to people.

Thank you, and I will take any questions you may have.