



JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



MELANIE LOYZIM
COMMISSIONER

**TESTIMONY OF
BRIAN KAVANAH, DIRECTOR
BUREAU OF WATER QUALITY
MAINE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

SPEAKING NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST L.D. 296

**AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION, LAKE WATER QUALITY RESTORATION AND PROTECTION FUND**

SPONSORED BY REPRESENTATIVE BRIDGEO

**BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE
ON
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

DATE OF HEARING:

FEBRUARY 12, 2025

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the Committee, I am Brian Kavanah, Director of the Bureau of Water Quality at the Department of Environmental Protection, speaking neither for nor against L.D. 296.

Lakes are an integral part of Maine's landscape. Our 6,000 lakes are vital to the state's fish and wildlife, residents, visitors, and economy. Many of Maine's communities are defined in large measure by their lakes and approximately 28% of our population on public drinking water sources get their drinking water from a Maine lake. Despite having some of the cleanest and clearest lakes in the nation, the water quality of many Maine lakes is considered threatened by a variety of sources.

AUGUSTA
17 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0017
(207) 287-7688 FAX: (207) 287-7826

BANGOR
106 HOGAN ROAD, SUITE 6
BANGOR, MAINE 04401
(207) 941-4570 FAX: (207) 941-4584

PORTLAND
312 CANCO ROAD
PORTLAND, MAINE 04103
(207) 822-6300 FAX: (207) 822-6303

PRESQUE ISLE
1235 CENTRAL DRIVE, SKYWAY PARK
PRESQUE ISLE, MAINE 04769
(207) 764-0477 FAX: (207) 760-3143

L.D. 296 would provide \$4,000,000 in one time funding for the Lake Water Quality Restoration and Protection Fund (the Fund). The Fund is established at 38 M.R.S § 480-N. and provides the Department with authority to grant funds for projects to improve or maintain the quality of lake waters in the State. It is an important fund that allows for good work. The 131st Legislature appropriated \$200,000 into this fund. The Department has conditionally awarded these grant funds to the Worromontogus (Togus) Lake Association to support an alum treatment to restore the lake's water quality.

While the Department appreciates the intent of this bill, the proposed \$4,000,000 funding from the General Fund is not included in the Governor's proposed budget and would require the diversion of funds from other important priorities. Therefore, the Department's position on L.D. 296 is neither for nor against.

I would be happy to answer any questions you have, now, or at the work session.

Thank you.