



**Testimony in Support of LD646, Resolve, Establishing the Commission to Study  
Unregulated Storm Water Pollution**

**March 3, 2025**

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Cathy Breen, and I serve as the Director of Government Affairs for Maine Conservation Alliance. Today I speak on behalf of the Environmental Priorities Coalition (EPC) in support of LD646, *Resolve, Establishing the Commission to Study Unregulated Storm Water Pollution*. The EPC is an inclusive statewide alliance of 39 conservation, climate action, and public health organizations. Each year we collectively identify a slate of policy priorities to act on the climate crisis, further environmental justice, protect land, water, and wildlife, and cultivate healthy Maine communities. LD646 is one of nine priority bills for the 132nd Legislature thus far.

You have already heard much about the problem this bill addresses: unmanaged stormwater that carries all manner of pollutants into our streams, rivers, lakes, ponds, mud flats and the ocean. From fertilizers to PFAS to heavy metals, these pollutants have profound and lasting harmful effects on Maine's waters. These are the waters that not only sustain our fishing, shellfish, aquaculture, tourism, and recreation sectors, but sustain us as human beings who rely on clean water for our long-term health and well-being. Given recent extreme weather events in Maine and predictions for increasing severity in storm activity due to climate change<sup>1</sup>, the time to drill down on stormwater management - and the science-based data that informs that management - is now. And while the advocacy group leading this bill is Friends of Casco Bay, stormwater knows no geographic boundaries; this issue affects every corner of Maine, and that's why the EPC has prioritized it.

I encourage you to take the concerns of various stakeholders into consideration as you deliberate on this Resolve. But also to keep in mind the overarching goal of the proposed study: to inform the Department of Environmental Protection and to develop actions and resources that the **state** can employ to better manage stormwater. The goal is **not to burden municipalities** with more obligations to regulate stormwater. Moreover, the goal is not to inhibit much needed housing development. I have no doubt that the bill sponsor will work with the advocacy community to make sure that all voices are heard.

On a procedural note, should this Resolve earn the support of this committee and the full legislature, it will wind up on the Special Study Table among similar Resolves where it will compete for limited funds. It's the Legislative Council - not the Appropriations Committee - that decides which studies merit funding and which do not. This Resolve is drafted to allow for outside funding if necessary, so that funding is not a reason to vote against the study. That will go a long way in getting the study off the Special Study Table.

On behalf of the 39 members of the EPC, I urge you to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD646. I thank you for your time and I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.maine.gov/climateplan/climate-impacts>

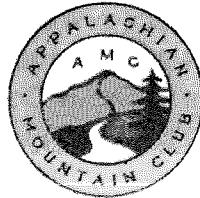
# ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES COALITION



- Founded in 2004
- Convened and facilitated by Maine Conservation Alliance
- Represents more than 120,000 Mainers
- Rooted in deep partnerships, shared resources, and collective work
- Characterized by shared networks, strategic organizing, and communication, and coordinated legislative advocacy



Acadia  
Center



Conservation  
Law Foundation



Solutions for a  
Toxic-Free Tomorrow



Friends of Casco Bay  
CASCO BAYKEEPER

Gateway Community Services Maine



Immigrant Welcome Center  
GREATER PORTLAND

