



INTERLOCAL
STORMWATER
WORKING
GROUP
c/o Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District
35 Main Street
Windham, Maine 04062

February 26, 2025

Re: Neither For nor Against LD 646: "Resolve, Establishing the Commission to Study Unregulated Storm Water Pollution"

Dear Environment and Natural Resources Committee Members,

My name is Angela Blanchette and I am Scarborough's Town Engineer and Vice Chair of the Interlocal Stormwater Working Group (ISWG). ISWG was created to protect the Casco Bay and Saco Bay watersheds through stormwater collaboration, shared funding, and pollution prevention in the Greater Portland and Saco region, including regional implementation of municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) permit requirements. It consists of the Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District, 14 municipalities, and two colleges (listed in our letterhead). Together, ISWG works with many regional partners and state department staff to share stormwater resources to cost-effectively address statewide and local stormwater issues.

We would like to share several concerns we have regarding the bill for you to consider:

1. **Stormwater management in Maine needs significantly more State and Federal funding. It is not obvious how a Study Commission will increase this funding.** In 2024, DEP created a new State Revolving Fund (SRF) for stormwater and nonpoint source projects. However, in both 2024 and 2025, only \$200,000 was allocated to the fund. To effectively address most stormwater issues, typical projects involve engineering designs, permitting, and construction costs, which are well over the \$50,000 loan cap. Maine stormwater permittees have identified a funding need of more than \$275 million for existing stormwater infrastructure improvements, pollution prevention projects, and other program efforts. This work has already been done, and now funding is needed.
2. **Currently Stormwater is primarily funded at the municipal level by our local tax dollars.** State funding sources need to have streamlined application processes and flexibility, as stormwater projects are most cost-effective when they can be done in conjunction with other underground utility work, like drinking water, wastewater, and gas lines. This also reduces impacts to residents and businesses through reduced road and sidewalk closures and shorter service disruptions. Similar to drinking water and wastewater, stormwater has both routine expenses that can be planned and budgeted for in advance and emergency expenses, where stormwater infrastructure needs immediate attention to prevent a major pollutant hazard or public safety issue. Funding support is needed for both instances and should be the primary focus of our elected officials.
3. **This bill will only add more work to DEP, which has been underfunded and understaffed for over a decade.** Without funding and staff at DEP the Commission's recommendations will become the responsibility and burden of the municipalities and ultimately our local taxpayers. DEP needs more funding and their staff need to have a much more active role in creating the monitoring program procedures, collecting data, performing data analysis,

Biddeford | Cape Elizabeth | CCSWCD | Cumberland | Falmouth | Freeport | Gorham | Old Orchard Beach | Portland
Saco | Scarborough | South Portland | SMCC | USM | Westbrook | Windham | Yarmouth



c/o Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District
35 Main Street
Windham, Maine 04062

and creating realistic and cost-effective recommendations that can be consistent across town lines. Watersheds do not stop at municipal boundaries and solutions need to be done with a holistic approach by the State.

Based on the number of unmet existing stormwater needs and solutions already identified, we have serious concerns of the bill's ability to reduce stormwater pollution without undue burden and redundancy for municipalities.

Stormwater management works best through partnerships and collaboration. There is still much to do to improve statewide stormwater efforts. We must work collaboratively to be efficient and effective. We welcome any questions you may have. Please join our next ISWG meeting on Thursday, March 20th from 8:30-11:00 AM in Westbrook for further details on the work being done and the support that is needed for more to be done.

Thank you,

Angela Blanchette, PE, ISWG Vice Chair

Town Engineer, Town of Scarborough

Doug Roncarati, ISWG Chair

Co-Stormwater Program Coordinator, City of Portland

Ali Clift, ISWG Facilitator

Education & Outreach Coordinator, Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District