



STATE OF MAINE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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**Testimony of the Maine Public Utilities Commission
In Support of
LD 1346, An Act Regarding the Supply of Water to the Town of New Sharon**

April 16, 2025

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and Distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology (Committee), my name is Deirdre Schneider, testifying in support of LD 1346, An Act Regarding the Supply of Water to the Town of New Sharon on behalf of the Public Utilities Commission (Commission).

LD 1346 repeals the charter of the New Sharon Water District and directs the Town of New Sharon to assume operations, the assets and liabilities of the District.

In September 2023, the Commission opened a formal investigation to examine the acts and practices of the District, as the District appeared to have potential difficulties in satisfying its financial obligations. The Commission expanded the scope of the investigation to include consideration of and the appointment of a receiver for the District because the district was also having issues with maintaining a quorum to conduct the District's business. A January 18, 2024, order appointed a receiver to oversee the operations of the District. By February 14, 2024, the Town had appointed trustees, so the receivership was terminated; however, by the end of March 2024, the District had again failed to maintain a quorum as all trustees had resigned. The Town requested that the Commission again appoint a receiver. The Commission then travelled to New Sharon for an evidentiary hearing concerning the need for a receiver and also held a public witness hearing regarding an anticipated rate increase and the request of the Town for the appointment of a second receiver. As the Commission continued the search for a receiver, the board was reconstituted by July 1, 2024.

As illustrated, it will likely be in the best interest of the ratepayers for the Town to assume operations of the District. The issues with finding people willing to be a trustee for the District impacts its operations and the Town will likely be better equipped to continuously manage the District.

The Commission notes that the language in LD 1346 does not include language regarding the approval of the transfer by the Commission and this language has been included in other bills effectuating such a transfer. This language is not intended to prevent the transfer but rather is intended to ensure that any transfer is otherwise consistent with all requirements of a regulated utility under Title 35-A.

I would be happy to answer any questions or provide additional information for the work session.