



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Testimony of Representative Sheila Lyman
to present LD 2041, **An Act to Eliminate the Debt Limit of the North Jay Water District**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology
January 20, 2026

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs and Honorable Members of the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to present LD 2041, An Act to Eliminate the Debt Limit of the North Jay Water District. As the Representative of Livermore Falls, Jay, and part of Livermore, I respectfully urge you to support this emergency proposal because it addresses a real and urgent health and safety issue in the community.

This is an emergency proposal to remove the current debt limit of \$900,000 from the North Jay Water District's charter so the District may borrow money to fund a major infrastructure project as soon as possible. The project is to replace the water main and it is projected to cost approximately eleven million dollars. This comes after numerous water main breaks in recent years, each of which created serious risks to public health.

Stepping back, North Jay Water District was incorporated in 1947 with a debt limit of \$100,000. The debt limit has been changed twice already with the last change being made in 2003. Now, this proposal is to eliminate the debt limit so the District can operate without having to come back to the Legislature for this purpose again and again. The North Jay Water District is ultimately responsible for its finances and accountable to its customers and ratepayers.

There is no question that the North Jay Water District water main needs to be replaced and that the work is necessary. The District has experienced multiple water main breaks in recent years and each break causes a public health problem and the need for emergency repairs. I trust that the North Jay Water District is lining up the proper work to ensure safe drinking water. My role here is to make sure that (1) the District Legislatively-granted charter is not an obstacle to funding opportunities through the Maine Bond Bank or other lender and (2) the charter is not an obstacle to providing safe drinking water for people and businesses served by the North Jay Water District.



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Again, this is emergency legislation so we can remove the debt limit of \$900,000 from the North Jay Water District's charter and allow the District to borrow money to replace the aged water main as soon as possible. Given the District's need to borrow the money, bid the project, and the time for the construction itself, lifting the debt limit is the first, essential step that must be addressed as soon as possible.

I respectfully request that you support this legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sheila Lyman".

Representative Sheila Lyman
House District 76