

SANFORD WATER DISTRICT

Box 650 - River Street
SANFORD, MAINE 04073

DAVID PARENT
Superintendent

Tel. 324-2312
Fax 324-1267

February 17, 2026

Honorable Chip Curry, Chair
Honorable Traci Gere, Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Housing & Economic Development
Maine State Legislature
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: Testimony in Opposition to LD 2173, "An Act to Update the Laws Regarding Housing Developments and Accessory Dwelling Units"

Dear Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and Members of the Committee on Housing and Economic Development:

The Sanford Water District respectfully submits testimony in opposition to the portions of LD 2173 that would remove local municipal authority to regulate subsurface wastewater disposal for the purpose of protecting public drinking water supplies, specifically Sections 7, 10-C, 12, and 18.

While the Sanford Water District recognizes and supports the urgent need for additional housing opportunities in Maine, it is critical that such efforts not undermine longstanding protections for public drinking water supplies. Reliable public water infrastructure is, in fact, a key factor that enables higher-density and sustainable housing development. Preserving municipal authority to protect water sources therefore supports—rather than hinders—responsible growth.

Sanford, like many Maine communities served by public water, has adopted a local groundwater protection ordinance designed to safeguard its sources of drinking water. The District currently maintains nine groundwater sources of supply - six active sources, three standby supplies, plus one identified future source. Each source has delineated wellhead protection areas that are incorporated into Sanford's ordinance, where restricted and prohibited activities are carefully tailored to site-specific hydrogeologic conditions and surrounding land uses.

Eliminating local authority to regulate subsurface wastewater disposal within these protection zones would pose a significant risk to the integrity of our public water supply. A statewide, one-size-fits-all approach cannot adequately account for the highly localized and unique conditions that influence groundwater vulnerability. Sanford's ordinance reflects these realities by dividing protection areas into three wellhead districts, each further separated into Zone A and Zone B designations, with subsurface wastewater disposal permitted in certain locations under specific conditions and prohibited in others. This localized framework is essential to effective source-water protection while allowing development that does not threaten the water supply.

For these reasons, the Sanford Water District respectfully urges the Committee to retain local authority for the protection of public water supplies and to amend LD 2173 accordingly. We would welcome the opportunity to work with the Committee and stakeholders to develop language that advances housing goals while maintaining essential source-water protections.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Parent", written in a cursive style.

David Parent
Superintendent