



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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*Testimony of Rep. Kristen Cloutier in support of
LD 676, An Act To Reclassify Part of the Androscoggin River to Class B
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources*

Senator Brenner, Representative Tucker, and distinguished members of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, I am Kristen Cloutier and I proudly represent House District 60, part of my hometown of Lewiston, in the Maine State Legislature. I submit this testimony in support of **LD 676, An Act To Reclassify Part of the Androscoggin River to Class B.**

When I was growing up in Lewiston-Auburn, the Androscoggin River was one of the most polluted rivers in the country. However, thanks to the hard work and determination of city government, industry, and environmentalists to improve the river's quality over the past 50 years, data has shown that the Lower River has met Class B standards 99% of the time for the past 20 of those years.

Since the enactment of Edmund Muskie's Clean Water Act in 1972, the River has improved gradually, now hosting recreational events such as sport fishing, winter ice fishing, canoeing, kayaking and crew regattas. The cities on the River have built walking paths and riverside parks. Our section of the River in Lewiston-Auburn features boat launches, fishing areas, canals, and dams. Businesses are flourishing along its banks and canals. Each Spring and Summer, as the temperatures rise and the days become longer, patrons take to the decks at local restaurants to enjoy dinner with a view. The Twin Cities have dedicated considerable resources to its beautification, constructing amphitheaters to host numerous outdoor events and summer concerts.

The Androscoggin River has become the center of much of our economic development. Reclassifying it from Class C to Class B would help us to continue this redevelopment and the revitalization of our downtowns and our cities.

As a cosponsor, I would also like to request that passage of this bill be delayed until the second session of the 130th Legislature, so that the DEP has the opportunity to renew 2020-expired discharge permits for Lewiston/Auburn, Lisbon and Brunswick wastewater plants at the current C classification. This would allow for the legally required upgrade to Class B, while providing

five years for dischargers and the DEP to formulate and enact any necessary plans to meet Class B conditions.

Thank you for your consideration.