



Testimony of Matt Marks Against LD 676

An Act to Reclassify Part of the Androscoggin River to Class B

May 3, 2021 9:00 AM

Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Senator Brenner, Representative Tucker, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. My name is Matt Marks; I am a Scarborough resident representing the Associated General Contractors of Maine today.

Maine DEP is required to study the water quality of rivers at least every three years. The Board of Environmental Protection is also required to hold hearings and proposed changes to the classification if warranted. The United States Environmental Protection Agency must approve the requested changes. The process includes a public input phase where advocates may share their opinion.

AGC Maine suggests that an economic study be conducted for consideration before adopting the change to the river class. It's clear this would impact existing industrial facilities that support both urban and rural jobs. Balancing the health of a river and maintaining the working components is important. Reclassifying the Androscoggin River will risk commercial and industrial operations that are also part of Maine's working history.

The river meets the Class B standards the majority of time and will continue to have improvements as adjacent facilities are upgraded. Instead of reclassifying, AGC Maine respectfully asks this Legislature to continue investments into upgrading stormwater and wastewater facilities. According to the recent report by the Maine Chapter of the American Society for Civil Engineers - stormwater received a C- and listed the current contributing factor as, "Within the past five decades, extreme precipitation events increased by 70% which is more significant than in any other US region." Tacking the backlog of infrastructure investments will have a positive impact of Maine's waters.

We ask the Committee to allow Maine DEP's process recommending changes through their evaluation process to continue.

Respectfully submitted by,

Matt Marks, AGC Maine