

Amy Bonsall
Lake Wesserunsett Association
LD 164

My name is Amy Bonsall. I spend summers on Lake Wesserunsett in Madison, Maine and I am on the board of the Lake Wesserunsett Association. Our mission is to preserve and enhance the lake and watershed.

I am asking for your support today for LD 164: An Act to Fund the Lake Restoration and Protection Fund.

Others will speak of the risks to our waterways, and I am confident this committee knows those risks well. I want to speak to the importance of state-wide initiatives. We did research on our lake in 2021 and found that many day trippers and local residents were unaware of the risks of invasive species. We looked at analogous situations to understand how change was made. One example that impressed me was Texas' statewide campaign against litter (Don't Mess With Texas), which reduced litter by over 70% within 3 years. I truly believe we need to raise awareness (amongst other things) much more broadly across the state, not just around the most at-risk lakes.

I also believe we need to be more closely communicating and collaborating across the state, so Susan Gallo of Maine Lakes and I started a grassroots community-building initiative last summer, using free technology that allows for instantaneous communication. All are welcome.

These are just two examples of the many things that I believe are important at state-level to help make positive change for our lakes and waterways. A more unified effort will help us maintain Maine as the Vacationland we know and love.

Thank you for taking a hearing on this bill. I ask that you vote in favor of it to preserve our lakes and waterways for generations to come.