

January 29, 2023

Greetings to Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources.

Re: LD 164

Thank you for offering this opportunity for those concerned about the present and future of Maine's many lakes to advocate for this bill. I am Bruce Burnham, current president of the Greater Pushaw Lake Association(GPLA), which encompasses Pushaw Lake, an 8 mile long shallow water lake(average 11 feet), and Little Pushaw Pond a few miles upstream of the Pushaw Lake inlet. The lakes system involves four municipalities - Hudson, Glenburn, Orono, and Old Town, and we report to these annually about our work. My family has been on Pushaw Lake for about 100 years.

Like so many lakes in Maine, almost all of the buildable land around Pushaw Lake has seasonal camps or year-round homes on it. Each property has a septic system which represents possible source of nutrient flow into the lake with the potential for increased algae growth. Almost every site has a dock which can mean foot and vehicle traffic on paths that bring more nutrients into the lake. These are only two examples of the stresses development creates.

The GPLA, a membership organization, is involved in a number of significant efforts to help keep our lakes' waters as clean as possible. We have volunteer "LakeSmart" evaluators who will do a friendly, detailed informational review for a family who asks us to inspect their property for potential problems that might contribute to lower water quality. Our trained teams regularly monitor water quality factors including clarity, dissolved oxygen and phosphorus counts. We send out a twice-annual newsletter to landowners around the lakes that reports on water quality, encourages participation in clean water efforts, and offers articles that teach about these issues. Our boards members represent all four towns on their individual landings on both lakes, and are both eyes and ears on what goes on in their parts of each lake. And we maintain a website(greaterpushaw.org) and a Facebook page where many interested people can learn, share information and enjoy uploaded photos of wild life and activities throughout the year.

In all of this organizational work, we see the potential need for the funds that LD164 represents in correcting problems which can gravely damage water quality here on the Pushaws, and around the state. We are currently working with both Orono and Glenburn in the implementation of courtesy boat inspections that look for invasive weeds on boats, their trailers, and the vehicles that haul them. We are exploring signage for their landings and for Old Town's much smaller landing for those times when inspectors aren't present but boats can still be launched. We look for ways to further impede pollution and work with other NGO's that are concerned about our Maine waterways. And we count on information from and efforts of the Maine Department of Environmental Protection in all this work.

Please fund this bill so that as our warming climate and peoples' usage continue to change our lakes, financial resources and expert information and advice are available to help keep our waters clean.

My thanks for your work for our State, and consideration of this bill, and thanks from our Board of Directors as well.
Bruce Burnham, Greater Pushaw Lake Association