

Maine



Rivers

*OUR MISSION IS TO
PROTECT, RESTORE AND
ENHANCE THE ECOLOGICAL
HEALTH OF MAINE'S RIVER
SYSTEMS*

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February 6, 2023

RE: LD 164, An Act to Fund the Lake Restoration and Protection Fund

Dear Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich, and Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee:

We are writing in strong support of LD 164. The bill seeks funding to invest and support programs to maintain the health of Maine's lakes and ponds. This is an investment that we heartily support.

Maine's waters are of incalculable value, yet at great risk. The impacts of climate change are upon us. Warming temperatures will increase the threats to water quality, increasing the likelihood of algae blooms and cyanobacteria outbreaks. With this changing climate we can also expect to see greater numbers of invasive species, which put our native plants and creatures at risk.

Please look 50 years ahead. As we've just celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Clean Water Act, we believe it would be appropriate to look ahead five decades to consider what measures can be taken now to protect and improve Maine's water quality. We encourage you to consider directing some of this funding to include a long-term assessment of the implication of climate change for Maine's lakes and waters, with recommendations for actions to mitigate and minimize these impacts. We are not aware of any such assessment, yet we know that those children who are in kindergarten today, as adults, will be forced to confront profound challenges to water quality, loss of biodiversity, and habitat degradation.

Consider the connections between lakes and rivers. The health of our waters is of interest to all of our citizens. Maine's lakes and ponds are connected to our rivers and streams. Lakes serve as spawning habitat for native fish species, including alewife, a keystone species. The health of our lakes should serve to strengthen connections between our waters, to broadly improve the health and productivity of all our waterways.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Landis Hudson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Landis Hudson
Maine Rivers Executive Directo