

Dear Chair LaFountain, Chair Landry, and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee,

I, Richard C. Windecker, and my wife, Patricia, strongly support LD2141.

We own a seasonal home on the east shore of Lake Pocasset in Wayne, where, as retirees, we spend about five months every year. This property has been in the family since 1947. I have ancestors from Auburn-Lewiston, Fayette, Readfield, Belgrade, and other towns going back to before the Revolution.

The two of us have been active in the Invasive Plant Patrol (IPP) on Lake Pocasset every summer for the last 15 years. This work has been under the collective auspices of the Lake Stewards of Maine (LSM), the 30-Mile River Association, and the Pocasset Lake Association (PLA). We both are currently members of the Board of the PLA. We are well aware of the ongoing efforts to control the Variable Milfoil infestation in Lake Androscoggin, the next lake down in the chain from Lake Pocasset. Fortunately, up to now, we have not found any invasive aquatic plants among the 25 native species we are well familiar with in Lake Pocasset.

We urge you to support this bill to increase support for efforts to prevent and combat invasive aquatic plants in Maine. We urge you to support particularly the provision that the DEP and IFW assess current protocols regarding boats coming out of infested waterbodies. We think that prevention of infestations is much more cost-effective than trying to deal with infestations after they happen. We agree that by far the most common mechanism that results in the introduction of an invasive plant into a lake or river is a boat and a trailer taken from one to another. In most of these cases, public boat launches are used. We definitely agree that much more regulation of such activities is needed. I have seen a boat trailer pulled out of Lake Maranacook at a public boat launch with a huge amount of plant material wrapped around the axle and the owner completely and belligerently unconcerned. I spoke with a high school student doing courtesy boat inspections at the same public boat launch on a busy weekend last summer. Although this can certainly be helpful, it is very far from sufficient. We suggest you consider having the state administered registrations for boats, and especially boat trailers, be enhanced to include restrictions on where boats and trailers can be put into lakes. We also suggest you consider the possibility of having the state require that any boat or trailer that has been in an infested waterbody be conspicuously marked. Lake Arrowhead is an obvious, horrible example of such a lake. A heavy fine should be levied, or even stronger measures imposed, if such a boat or trailer is found in another lake. We suggest that boats on trailers entering Maine from another state should be stopped, carefully inspected, and issued carefully limited permits.

Although not mentioned in the bill, a second place where we suggest some effort could be usefully spent is research on how aquatic plants that are invasive in Maine are controlled, if at all, in their native habitats. There may be things to be learned there that could help inform our decisions in Maine. When we have asked experts about what is

known about how these plants are controlled in their native environments, we have received just blank stares.

Thank you,

Richard C., and Patricia A. windecker.
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