

Testimony in SUPPORT of LD 171,
An Act to Enhance Protections Regarding Invasive Aquatic Plant
Infestations in Inland Waters of the State
Submitted to Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee February 11, 2025

On behalf of the Annabessacook Lake Improvement Association (ALIA), we are submitting this testimony in support of LD 171.

ALIA, with support from our membership, other watershed organizations, and several state agencies, has been battling the spread of invasive variable-leaf milfoil in our lake for the last decade. It is an ongoing, unrelenting effort.

The current Courtesy Boat Inspection process, while helpful, would certainly benefit from stronger protocols, up to and including mandatory inspection as opposed to the current voluntary approach.

Annabessacook Lake has had a Surface Use Restriction in effect for several years. This is in the area of the lake where the original infestation was identified, and it has proved to be the most intractable section to manage. Despite the markers in the lake outlining the SUR, signage posted at a now-closed (but still utilized) section of entry, and constant reminders to our community about this designation, we continue to receive reports of watercraft within that space. Our only recourse is to notify the Game Warden and hope whoever is on call for our lake at that time can arrive in time to deal with the perpetrators. While we greatly appreciate the Game Wardens' support, it is an inefficient way to deal with a time-sensitive violation.

We urge the committee to vote yes on this bill.

Carol Branning (President)
John Branning (Secretary)
Annabessacook Lake Improvement Association