

Elizabeth Trehu  
Vienna  
LD 171

Letter in Support of LD171

I live in Vienna, Maine, in close proximity to Parker Pond and Minnehonk Lake, and have a camp on Flying Pond, where I am a member of the Invasive Plant Patrol. I am writing in strong support of LD 171, An Act to Enhance Protections Regarding Invasive Aquatic Plant Infestations in Inland Waters of the State. In our watershed alone, we are battling two invasive aquatic species, variable milfoil in Androscoggin Lake, and swollen bladderwort in Tilton Pond. The most common source of these invasives is from trailers and watercraft that picked up these plants in areas of infestations in other lakes. In the summer of 2024, one of the courtesy boat inspectors on Echo Lake found variable water milfoil on a boat trailer, fortunately in time to prevent the plant from being introduced into the lake. This exemplifies the precarious state in which our lakes exist, in which one stray plant can start an infestation that takes many years and hundreds of thousands of dollars to mitigate and is sometimes impossible to eradicate. More preventive action is desperately needed, and strengthening watercraft inspection protocols and surface use restriction in areas of known infestation is absolutely critical. I urge the committee to approve this bill, which asks only that IFW and EPA review current protocols and surface use restrictions and explore ways to strengthen them. This seems like a no-brainer to me as a first step towards protecting the lakes and ponds that are essential to the wonderful quality of life that we enjoy here in Maine.