



April 28, 2025

To: Environment and Natural Resources Committee

From: Megunticook Watershed Association

Re: LD 1763: An Act to Regulate Nonwater-dependent Floating Structures on Maine's Waters

Please support LD 1763 for these reasons:

- **Littoral Habitat:** Shallow, near-shore habitat is essential for Maine's fish and other aquatic life, providing feeding and breeding areas as well as cover and shelter. NWFS moored in shallow waters may damage these fragile aquatic habitats, altering fish habitat by shading out plant growth that is essential for feeding and reproduction. They may also change water temperatures and dissolved oxygen levels, impacting fish and other aquatic life.
- **Sewage:** Sewage, human waste, and greywater pose a risk to public health, water quality, and wildlife. The risks posed by NWFS either leaking sewage (with substandard plumbing) or discharging directly into lakes are high and are not acceptable on our publicly owned Great Ponds. Assuring houseboats meet standards for waste management is an important piece of LD 1763.
- **Equitable Access:** Access to our public waterways is an essential right. While one or two NWFS on a lake may not feel like a big deal, without statewide regulation the scale and range of NWFS will continue to grow. More NWFS create the potential for growing conflicts over access, as well as further degradations to lake water quality and potential negative impacts to our vital outdoor industries.
- **Uniform Regulations:** Stress and tension have grown among towns as some towns have created ordinances prohibiting NWFS, resulting in shifts of NWFS to parts of lakes in neighboring towns. A uniform state regulation will lessen the regulatory burden on towns and eliminate a piece-meal approach that is confusing, while also providing equitable lake protection and access across the state.
- **Rulemaking:** LD 1763 includes a provision for rulemaking around additional exceptions and clarifications, which we believe will be important given the complexity of the bill and the challenge in clearly defining NWFS.

Megunticook Watershed covers approximately 31 square miles and includes portions of the towns of Camden, Hope, Lincolnville, and Searsmont. Maine's great ponds and waterways are a limited and precious resource that fuel the economy as well as provide habituate and recreational use for millions of people. Please support LD 1763.

Abby Kidder

Executive Director, Megunticook Watershed Association

Camden, Lincolnville, Hope, Searsmont / Knox and Waldo Counties

207-200.3513 / abby@megunticook.org