

LUCY E. McDERMOTT
DOVER-FOXCROFT, MAINE

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To whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my strong support for LD 1763, "An Act to Regulate Nonwater-dependent Floating Structures on Maine's Waters." This legislation represents a crucial step toward preserving the ecological integrity and traditional uses of Maine's waterways.

As a Mainer who deeply values our natural resources, I am concerned about the increasing presence of nonwater-dependent floating structures, such as houseboats and floating homes. These structures can pose significant environmental risks, including water pollution and habitat disruption, and may interfere with public access and recreational activities.

My family's camp on Sebec Lake holds a special place in my heart, and was a large reason why I returned home to Maine after my career took me to California. Our family works closely with the Piscataquis County Soil and Water Conservation District to ensure that we're "Lake Smart" with all of our actions to preserve the beauty of Sebec Lake for generations to come. In recent years, we've become increasingly concerned about the proliferation of floating structures—essentially homes on the water—that are moored for extended periods with no oversight, regulation, or regard for the impact they have on surrounding properties and the environment.

These unregulated floating structures undermine the value and enjoyment of our camps. They can obstruct views, cause noise disturbances, create potential sanitation and waste disposal issues, and reduce privacy and access to the water we have cared for and maintained. Unlike traditional camps or lakefront homes, these structures do not follow local zoning, do not contribute to the property tax base, and often avoid the permitting processes that responsible landowners must adhere to.

LD 1763 introduces necessary and common-sense regulations to distinguish between legitimate boats and nonwater-dependent floating structures. It ensures enforcement authority for local officials and sets minimum safety and mobility requirements for houseboats. These steps are critical to protecting Maine's waters, the investments of shoreline property owners, and the character of our lakes and coastlines.

I respectfully urge you and your colleagues to pass LD 1763. For those of us who have long been part of Maine's waterfront communities, this legislation helps ensure that future generations can enjoy the same natural beauty, recreational opportunities, and peace of mind that brought us here in the first place.

I deeply appreciate your efforts to address this issue, which has significant implications for property owners, like my family, who value and invest in the stewardship of our shorefronts.

By implementing these measures, LD 1763 balances the rights of individuals to enjoy Maine's waters with the collective responsibility to safeguard our environmental heritage. I commend you and your co-sponsors for your leadership on this important issue.

Thank you for your leadership and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Lucy McDermott