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Conservation
Community

Larry T. Spencer
Vice Chair
Conservation
Commissions

Victoria Bunker
Historic/Archeological
Interests

Christopher Hodgdon
NH Fish & Game
Commission

Mark Lombardi
Granite State
Hydropower
Association

Frederick J. McNeill
Municipal Officer

Allan G. Palmer
Business & Industry
Association

Ruth Ward
Local River Management
Advisory Committees

Donald L. Ware
Public Water Suppliers

Stewart Yeaton
Agricultural Community

Vacant
Recreational Interests

Non-Voting Members:

Peter Bowman
NH Department of
Natural and Cultural
Resources

Jennifer Gilbert
NH Office of
Strategic Initiatives

Mark Hemmerlein
NH Department of
Transportation

Shawn Jasper
NH Department of
Agriculture,
Markets & Food

John Magee
NH Fish & Game
Department

Meghan Wells
NH Department of
Safety

Staff:

Tracie Sales
Program Manager

Vacant
Watershed Coordinator

Vacant
Program Assistant

N.H. Rivers Management and Protection Program

N.H. Rivers Management Advisory Committee

February 10, 2021

The Honorable Andrew Renzullo, Chair
House Resources, Recreation and Development Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 305
Concord, NH 03301

RE: HB 426 *An act relative to shoreland septic systems.*

Dear Chair Renzullo and Members of the Committee:

The Rivers Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) is writing to express its support of House Bill 426, which requires a septic system assessment prior to the sale of developed waterfront property.

This bill expands the number of properties required to complete a site assessment study when waterfront property is sold. Failed septic systems are a major contributor of bacteria and nutrients to New Hampshire's rivers and lakes. Bacteria can cause gastrointestinal illness for those who swim in our waters, and nutrients are the prime cause of toxic cyanobacteria blooms which can close our beaches and harm our pets who drink and swim in the water. Landowners should know the status of their septic systems and keep maintenance records as they would for any aspect of property management. Requiring owners of any waterfront property sold to assess the condition of the septic system, if the system was approved by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) more than 20 years prior, is an important step toward ensuring that our public surface waters are protected for the enjoyment of all.

The RMAC is a legislatively created body charged to work with NHDES to administer RSA 483, the Rivers Management and Protection Program. The Governor and Council appointed Committee is comprised of members from business, agriculture, hydroelectric, municipal government, water supply, conservation, recreation, fish and game, and historical interests. Among its other responsibilities, the RMAC is charged with reviewing legislation relevant to the Program and with advising the NHDES Commissioner on the merits of such legislation.

In conclusion, the RMAC supports HB 426 to ensure that water quality in our rivers and lakes remains good, protecting the health of residents and visitors who enjoy New Hampshire's surface waters.

Should you have any questions regarding our testimony, please feel free to contact me at 603.796.2615 or MLT@naturesource.net.

Sincerely,



Michele L. Tremblay
RMAC Chair

The Honorable Andrew Renzullo
Chair, House Resources, Recreation and Development Committee
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ec: Rep. Judith Spang
RMAC Representatives
Robert R. Scott, Commissioner, NHDES
Tom O'Donovan, Director, Water Division, NHDES
Ted Diers, Administrator, Watershed Mgmt. Bur., NHDES
Tracie Sales, Rivers and Lakes Programs Manager, NHDES
Local River Management Advisory Committee Chairs