

Voting Members:

Michele L. Tremblay
Chair
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

Robert M. Roseen
Recreational Interests

Ruth Ward
Local River Management
Advisory Committees

Donald L. Ware
Public Water Suppliers

Stewart Yeaton
Agricultural Community

Non-Voting Members:

Peter Bowman
NH Department of
Natural and Cultural
Resources

Brian Eaton
NH Department of
Safety

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

Staff:

Tracie Sales
Program Administrator

Vacant
Watershed Coordinator

Vacant
Program Assistant

N.H. Rivers Management and Protection Program

N.H. Rivers Management Advisory Committee

May 4, 2021

The Honorable Edward Gordon, Chair
House Judiciary Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 208
Concord, NH 03301

RE: SB 95 *An act relative to adopting omnibus legislation relative to remote meetings, penalties for violation of privacy, and establishing a committee to study remote meetings.*

Dear Chair Gordon and Members of the Committee:

The Rivers Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) is writing to express its support of PART I of Senate Bill 95, as amended by the Senate, which will allow public bodies subject to RSA 91-A to meet remotely beyond the declared emergency.

The RMAC has found that attendance at remote RMAC meetings has been higher, both by committee representatives and by members of the public, than when the RMAC met in person. While the committee prefers to meet in person when possible, allowing remote meetings permits busy volunteer committee members as well as the public to attend meetings during inclement weather or when they are not feeling well, and to join all or part of a meeting when schedules are tight. Staff in the Rivers Management and Protection Program have also reported a similar increase in attendance at local river management advisory committee meetings by committee members and the public, as well as by guest consultants discussing proposed projects in the committee's area of jurisdiction. The tools and protocols for remote meetings are available and familiar now, and we would like the option to continue meeting remotely as necessary.

The RMAC wishes to maintain the safety of its members and those of the public when this alternative continues.

The RMAC is a legislatively created body charged to work with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (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 SB 95 Part I because it will permit boards and commissions such as the RMAC to meet remotely while still allowing public involvement in the committee's work.

The Honorable Edward Gordon
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee
SB 95 May 4, 2021
Page 2

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

cc: Sen. Gary Daniels
Sen. Rebecca Perkins Kwoka
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