

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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126th MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2014

Legislative Document

No. 1694

H.P. 1218

House of Representatives, January 7, 2014

An Act To Improve the Water Quality of Inland Waters

(EMERGENCY)

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 203.

Reference to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources suggested and ordered printed.

Millicent M. MacFarland
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND
Clerk

Presented by Representative KESCHL of Belgrade.
Cosponsored by Senator SAVIELLO of Franklin.

1 **Emergency preamble. Whereas,** acts and resolves of the Legislature do not
2 become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

3 **Whereas,** Maine's lakes generate in excess of \$3,400,000,000 in revenue each year,
4 provide employment for 52,000 people and underpin our increasingly important tourism
5 economy; and

6 **Whereas,** water quality in Maine's lakes, considered as having some of the highest
7 water quality in the nation, has declined by as much as 20% since 1995 due to the
8 introduction of phosphorus and other pollutants carried by eroded soils and storm water
9 runoff from camp roads, driveways and lawns and from failing septic systems; and

10 **Whereas,** in many communities waterfront properties generate 60% to 70% of the
11 tax base and any decline in water quality will cause property values to drop by 15% to
12 20% and will shift the tax burden to nonwaterfront homeowners; and

13 **Whereas,** scientific studies demonstrate that programs such as the LakeSmart
14 program, which is a voluntary education and reward program for lakefront property
15 owners who maintain their property in ways that protect lake water quality and property
16 values, that keep phosphorus and other pollutants out of lakes are among the most cost-
17 effective ways to protect lakes; and

18 **Whereas,** the LakeSmart program, as operated by the Maine Lakes Society, has
19 tripled the number of lakes and waterfront properties that participate in the program; and

20 **Whereas,** the Maine Lakes Society operates the LakeSmart program for
21 approximately 2/3 of the cost of the program as run by the Department of Environmental
22 Protection; and

23 **Whereas,** the success of the LakeSmart program depends upon its widespread use
24 throughout the State; and

25 **Whereas,** it is in the best interest of the State to support the Maine Lakes Society
26 and its implementation of the LakeSmart program as the State seeks to ensure the health
27 of its long-term economy, the employment of its residents and the strength of its
28 communities; and

29 **Whereas,** scientific analysis of the data gathered through the efforts of volunteers
30 throughout the State who participate in the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program is
31 critical to the understanding of the current water quality of our lakes; and

32 **Whereas,** this legislation needs to take effect before the expiration of the 90-day
33 period in order to provide funding for the LakeSmart program and to analyze data from
34 the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program in fiscal year 2013-14; and

35 **Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within
36 the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as

1 immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now,
2 therefore,

3 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

4 **Sec. 1. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and
5 allocations are made.

6 **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, DEPARTMENT OF**

7 **Land and Water Quality 0248**

8 Initiative: Provides annual appropriations of \$80,000 for the purpose of supporting the
9 Maine Lakes Society in its implementation of the LakeSmart program and \$20,000 for
10 the purpose of analyzing the data gathered by the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring
11 Program.

12			
13	GENERAL FUND	2013-14	2014-15
14	All Other	\$100,000	\$100,000
15			
16	GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$100,000</u>	<u>\$100,000</u>

17 **Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this
18 legislation takes effect when approved.

19 **SUMMARY**

20 This bill appropriates \$100,000 annually to the Department of Environmental
21 Protection to provide \$80,000 to the Maine Lakes Society in its implementation of the
22 LakeSmart program and \$20,000 for the purpose of analyzing the data gathered by the
23 Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program.