

N.H. Lakes Management Advisory Committee

[N.H. Lakes Management and Protection Program](https://www.lmac.des.nh.gov/)
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<https://www.lmac.des.nh.gov/>

March 5, 2024

The Honorable Kevin Avard, Chair
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
Statehouse, Room 103
Concord, NH 03301

RE: SB 543 - AN ACT relative to establishing the state environmental adaptation, resilience, and innovation council.

Dear Chair Avard and Members of the Committee:

The Lakes Management Advisory Committee (LMAC) is writing to express its **support of Senate Bill 543**, with the condition that the funding provisions it contains are retained. The bill would establish a council to investigate ways to build resilience to environmental change in the private and public sectors.

Environmental change is already impacting state and municipal economies in New Hampshire, in ways that are likely to worsen with time. A few examples:

- Municipalities are facing mounting costs as increasing extreme flood events damage roads, culverts, bridges, and other infrastructure.
- We are aware of at least one municipality that elected to reduce planned funding for lake management in order to address large unexpected costs from recent flood damage.
- Towns have had to reprioritize and redesign projects to address non-point source pollution as floods significantly change planned work areas.
- Warming water temperatures increase the likelihood of cyanobacteria blooms. Blooms threaten public health, impede recreation, affect local businesses dependent on clean water and tourism, and decrease property values by up to 33%. Declines in tourism and in property values directly affect state and local revenue.

These examples demonstrate the complexity of environmental change, as impacts to one sector ripple through the economy and affect the fiscal and environmental stability of property owners, municipalities, and the state. It is in the long-term best interest of the state to have a stakeholder group that can learn more about the scope of changes anticipated, discuss likely implications of those changes, and make recommendations for ways to adapt. Without such a forum, all stakeholders are likely to face increasing instability and strain as the business landscape changes, existing funding mechanisms are exhausted, and environmental changes continue to accelerate.

LMAC VOTING MEMBERS: Andrea LaMoreaux, Chair NH LAKES • Ryan Cardella, Marine Trades Association • Tiffany Grade, Conservation Community • Janet Kidder, Planning Boards • Frank Lemay, NH Business & Industry Assoc. • Joanie McIntire, NH Association of Realtors • Amanda McQuaid, Scientific Community • Lisa Morin, State Conservation Committee • Susan Price, NH Fish & Game Commission • Dick Smith, Fishing Interests • Steve Wingate, Conservation Commissions • Vacant, Municipal Official • Vacant, NH Travel Council

LMAC NON-VOTING MEMBERS: Garret Graaskamp, Vice Chair, NH Fish & Game Dept. • Capt. Tim Dunleavy, NH Dept. of Safety • Eric Feldbaum, NH Dept. of Natural and Cultural Resources • Mark Hemmerlein, NH Dept. of Trans. • Allen Wyman, NH Dept. of Ag, Markets & Food • Vacant, NH Dept. of Business and Economic Affairs

The Honorable Kevin Avard
Chair, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
SB 543, March 5, 2024
Page 2

The LMAC considers it important to retain the funding mechanisms currently provided for in the bill. The charges in this bill are many, complex, and far-reaching. To discuss each in enough detail to reach meaningful decisions on needed next steps will require adequate meeting time and staff support. The funding mechanisms in the bill as drafted allow preserve flexibility to accept donations and accommodate funding needs.

The LMAC is a legislatively created body charged to work with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) to administer RSA 483-A, the Lakes Management and Protection Program. The Governor and Council appointed Committee is comprised of 19 members representing academia, business, conservation organizations, lake associations, tourism, fish and game commission, marine trades, realtors, municipal government as well as several state agencies.

In conclusion, the LMAC supports SB 543, for the reasons stated above. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Should you have questions, please feel free to contact me at (603) 569-3114 or stevewingate@roadrunner.com.

Respectfully,



Steve Wingate, LMAC Legislation Subcommittee

ec: Senators Watters, Rosenwald, Soucy, Perkins Kwoka, Whitley, Fenton, Prentiss, Altschiller, and Chandley
LMAC Representatives
Robert R. Scott, Commissioner, NHDES