

Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
% Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

March 22, 2023

RE: LD 379, *Resolve, Directing the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to Study the Effects of Wake Boats on Shoreline Property*

Dear Chair LaFountain, Chair Landry, and Members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee:

My name is Francesca Gundrum and I am Maine Audubon's Policy Advocate. Maine Audubon is the state's oldest and largest wildlife conservation non-profit. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to LD 379, *Resolved, Directing the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to Study the Effects of Wake Boats on Shoreline Property*.

While we appreciate the intent behind this legislation, the time and resources dedicated to studying the effects of wake boats on shoreline property and the use of a "wake safety zone" are duplicative of existing research and collaboration. The Maine Boating Impacts Coalition (MBIC) includes representatives from staffed and volunteer lake associations around the state and perspectives from lakefront landowners, wake boat owners, engineers, lawyers, scientists, and others. This coalition has been established for several years, employs a science and community-based approach to addressing the many impacts of wake boats, and has sought guidance from staff at the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. MBIC's collaborative work informed LD 693, *An Act to Protect Inland Water Quality, Shorelines, Wildlife and Public Safety by Prohibiting Operation of a Wake Boat to Create an Enhanced Wake Close to Shore or in Shallow Water*, which Maine Audubon supported and that our organization believes is a well-reasoned and researched approach to mitigating the impacts of wake boats.

Additionally, focusing solely on impacts to shoreline property is too narrow in scope for this issue. Effects on bottom sediment resuspension, invasive aquatic species, wildlife habitat, etc. are just a handful of variables that must be considered when addressing the impacts of wake boats. The MBIC includes these impacts and others in their approach to education, outreach, and advocacy. Inclusive and comprehensive work to address wake boat impacts on lake, wildlife, and public health is happening already. We believe that this bill would only delay this urgent and important work. Thank you for your time and I am happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,



Francesca "Ches" Gundrum
Policy Advocate