

Voting Members:

David Packard
Chair
NH Lakes Assn.

Bruce Allen
Conservation
Commissions

Mark Borrin
Tourism Industry

Shane Bradt
Scientific Community

Linda Brownson
State Conservation
Committee

Edmund Crawford
Marine Trades
Association

Tiffany Grade
Conservation
Community

Janet Kidder
Planning Boards

Frank Lemay
NH BIA

Ernest Millette
NH Fish & Game
Commission

Rex Norman
Municipal Official

Dick Smith
Fishing Interests

Mary Truell
NH Association of
Realtors

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

Jennifer Gilbert
NH Office of Strategic
Initiatives

Mark Hemmerlein
NH Dept. of Trans.

**David Rousseau/
Bob Wolff**
NH Dept. of
Ag, Markets & Food

Staff:

Tracie Sales
Program Manager

Jen Drociak
Watershed Coordinator

Mariah Mitchell
Program Assistant

N.H. Lakes Management and Protection Program
N.H. Lakes Management Advisory Committee

February 7, 2019

The Honorable Jeffrey Goley, Chair
House Executive Departments and Administration Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 306
Concord, NH 03301

RE: HB 150 *Relative to the penalty for failure to file the financial disclosure form required under RSA 15-A.*

Dear Chair Goley and Members of the Committee:

The Lakes Management Advisory Committee (LMAC) appreciates the opportunity to comment on House Bill 150, which adds a penalty of up to \$5,000 as well as late fees for anyone who fails to file the conflict of interest form under RSA 15-A. The LMAC opposes this bill.

While some of the people required to fill out the RSA 15-A financial disclosure form are state employees, the majority are unpaid volunteers who are members of advisory councils, boards, commissions, and committees. Many of these groups, including the LMAC, have no decision-making authority and only make recommendations to state agencies or the legislature, such as this letter of testimony.

As members of the Lakes Management Advisory Committee, we are required to fill out the form. However, we should not be penalized for caring about the management of New Hampshire's lakes and wishing to assist the state government in ensuring that our lakes can be enjoyed by all citizens now and in the future simply because we forget to fill out an annual form, which cannot be submitted electronically, by a deadline. Our interest in protecting our lakes is clearly stated in any recommendation we make, and any comment we submit is LESS likely to contain bias than that of the average citizen because of the wide array of interests we represent.

HB 150 proposes to penalize volunteerism in New Hampshire. The value of the hours donated to benefit the state by volunteers in the Lakes Management and Protection Program (RSA 483-A) and its sister program, the Rivers Management and Protection Program (RSA 483), is estimated at \$1.4 million between 1988 and 2016. Many volunteers in these programs have promised to resign should this legislation pass, as they cannot afford the threat of these fines. This will leave all of the valuable outreach, education, oversight, clean up, and other activities that these groups do on behalf of the state undone.

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

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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. Among its other responsibilities, the LMAC reviews legislation relevant to the Program and the state's lakes and ponds, and advises the NHDES Commissioner on the merits of such legislation.

In conclusion, the LMAC feels that HB 150 is inexpedient to legislate because it penalizes unpaid volunteers with no authority to make decisions and will result the resignation of many volunteers in the Lakes and Rivers Management and Protection Programs.

Should you have further questions about this testimony, please feel free to contact me at (603) 867-9299 or appliedforce52@gmail.com.

Sincerely,



David Packard
Chair

ec: Rep. Werner Horn
Rep. James Spillane
LMAC Representatives
Robert R. Scott, Commissioner, NHDES
Rene Pelletier, Assistant Director, Water Division, NHDES
Ted Diers, Administrator, Watershed Mgmt. Bur., NHDES
Tracie Sales, Rivers and Lakes Programs Manager, NHDES