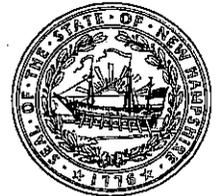




The State of New Hampshire  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**



**Thomas S. Burack, Commissioner**  
January 19, 2010

The Honorable Susan W. Almy, Chairman  
House Ways and Means Committee  
Rooms 202, Legislative Office Building  
Concord, NH 03301

**Subject:** HB1669, repealing certain tax and fee increases in 2010-2011 budget as of July 1, 2013

Dear Chairman Almy:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 1669. The Department of Environmental Services (DES) does not support HB 1669 because, by reversing provisions of HB 2 as enacted during the 2009 legislative session, Paragraphs 2 and 6 of the bill would negatively impact our ability to implement lake restoration and preservation programs. Specifically, HB 1669 would reduce the funds available to DES to distribute to communities and lakes associations for the control and prevention of the propagation of milfoil and other exotic aquatic plants that degrade water quality in New Hampshire's lakes and rivers.

In Paragraph 2, HB 1669 proposes to reduce the fee provided by boat registrations from \$7.50 to \$5.00 per boat registered that goes into the Lake Restoration and Preservation Fund. In Paragraph 6, it reduces the fees to specific accounts to which the \$7.50 per boat fee is designated, in particular the accounts for the "control of exotic aquatic weeds" (proposed to be reduced from \$3.00 to \$1.50 per boat) and the "milfoil and other exotic aquatic plants prevention program" (from \$4 to \$3 per boat). Total boat registrations vary from year to year but generally are in the order of 100,000 boats per year or, in recent years, slightly less. Therefore, HB 1669 would cause a reduction in funds for the Lakes Restoration and Preservation Fund from around or just under \$750,000 per year to around \$500,000 per year, or a revenue reduction of about \$250,000 per year.

New Hampshire currently has 83 infestations of exotic aquatic plants (primarily milfoil) in 72 waterbodies, up from less than ten prior to 1980. Strong local stewardship through active lake associations and communities is key to controlling the further spread of exotic species and managing or potentially eradicating existing infestations. In 2009, the Legislature recognized the need to increase the funding to the Lake Restoration and Preservation Fund to address an increasing demand for these funds to manage the exotic aquatic species problem. This fund provides grants to non-profit organizations and lake associations for activities such as lake host programs, under which boat launch sites are staffed during the summer months to ensure the removal and disposal of aquatic plants from boats and trailers, as well as the active control of milfoil in infested areas by a number of means. These funds also support research to evaluate potential new methods to eradicate or control exotic aquatic plants.

In conclusion, HB 1669 would reverse fee increases enacted by the Legislature during the 2009 Legislative Session. This would reduce the ability of DES, municipalities and lake

associations to prevent the spread of exotic aquatic plants, control existing infestations, and research ways to better manage this problem in the future.

Thank you again for this opportunity to comment on Amendment HB 1669. Please do not hesitate to call either me at 271-3503, or Jody Connor at 271-3414, if you have any questions or need additional information.

Very truly yours,

  
for Thomas S. Burack,  
Commissioner

cc: Representative Pepino  
Representative Baldasaro