



The State of New Hampshire
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Thomas S. Burack, Commissioner

February 24, 2011

The Honorable Bob Odell, Chairman
 Energy and Natural Resources Committee
 Legislative Office Building, Room 102
 Concord, NH 03301

RE: SB 184 - An Act extending the commission to study water infrastructure sustainability funding.

Dear Chairman Odell:

Thank you for this opportunity to comment in support of SB 184, which would extend the Commission to Study Water Infrastructure Sustainability Funding (Commission) that was initially formed in 2009 through the enactment of SB 60. The Department of Environmental Services (Department) supports this bill because it will allow the commission to complete its work. Specifically, SB 184 extends the Commission until November 1, 2011 so that critical research and analysis that is now underway can be completed. This information will allow the Commission to finalize and prioritize recommendations on how New Hampshire might ensure adequate funding to sustain critical water infrastructure including public drinking water systems, public wastewater and stormwater systems, and publicly owned dams. Given the amount of work remaining, the Department respectfully suggests that the extension deadline be changed to one year from the effective date of the act so that a full twelve months are available for this important commission to complete its study.

The following chart provides an estimate of the anticipated water infrastructure funding needs over the next decade:

Water Infrastructure Category	Estimated 10-Year Need
Public Wastewater Systems (not including all expected nutrient removal projects)	\$1,300,000,000
Public Drinking Water Systems	\$800,000,000
Public Stormwater Systems	(preliminary estimate) \$98,000,000
State Owned Dams	\$18,000,000
Municipally Owned Dams	\$40,000,000
Total Water Infrastructure Needs	\$2,112,000,000

These needs are a result of aging and decaying infrastructure, regulatory changes, and growth.

There is general recognition of the importance of water infrastructure to the economy and the health and welfare of NH Citizens. The Commission's preliminary findings underscore that keeping this infrastructure functioning benefits all, and can not be achieved in an affordable manner through user rates alone. Accordingly, the Commission is studying a variety of mechanisms, including education, long-term demand reduction, as well as possibly sustainable funding sources now being researched at the University of New Hampshire. When this work is completed, the Commission will be in a position to make sound recommendations that will serve as a framework for development of a long-term strategy for New Hampshire's water infrastructure that helps address the needs in an affordable manner for New Hampshire's citizens.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill. Please feel free to call Sarah Pillsbury at 271-1168, or me at 271-2958, if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,


 Thomas S. Burack
 Commissioner

cc: Senators Kelly, Merrill, Houde, Larsen, D'Allesandro and Odell