



The State of New Hampshire
Department of Environmental Services



Robert R. Scott, Commissioner

April 11, 2019

The Honorable Martha Fuller Clark, Chair
Energy and natural Resources Committee
State House, Room 103
Concord, NH 03301

RE: HB 475, AN ACT establishing a shoreland septic system study commission

Dear Chair Fuller Clark and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 475. This bill, as amended, establishes a study commission to evaluate possible methods to assess certain septic systems on properties located adjacent to New Hampshire lakes, ponds, and rivers. The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) supports HB 475, as amended.

On July 1, 1967, under the authority of RSA 149-M, the State of New Hampshire began approving the design and construction of septic systems on properties within 1,000 feet of a surface water. On July 1, 1971, the state extended that authority to apply to all properties within the state. The aforementioned authority under RSA 149-M is now implemented under RSA 485-A.

The amended bill includes suggestions discussed in the NHDES letter of testimony to the House Resources, Recreation and Development Committee. These suggestions included focusing on non-state approved septic systems, including commercial septic systems in the study verses only considering residential systems, and adding another subject of discussion relative to climate resilience. NHDES appreciates the inclusion of these suggestions in the amended bill.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this proposed legislation. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Robert Tardif, Subsurface Systems Bureau Administrator a 271-2904 or via email at robert.tardif@des.nh.gov.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Scott
Commissioner

cc: Representatives Spang, Oxenham, Malloy; Senators Bradley, Fuller Clark, Watters and Feltes