

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

Neither For Nor Against L.D. 531

“An Act Regarding Dam Ownership”

Presented by: Representative MILLIKEN of Blue Hill
Cosponsored by: Senator HAGGAN of Penobscot and Representatives BISHOP of Bucksport, MOONEN of Portland, Senator: GROHOSKI of Hancock.

DATE OF HEARING: Monday, March 31, 2025

Good afternoon, Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera and members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee. I am Timothy Peabody, Deputy Commissioner at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking on behalf of the Department, Neither for nor Against **L.D. 531**.

This bill is a concept draft and the Department wishes to provide support for the discussion and caution to not act without recognizing the current statutes and rules that need to be considered while deliberating on this topic.

The Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife is responsible to preserve protect and enhance inland fisheries and wildlife resources of the state to encourage the wise use of these resources; ensure coordinated planning for the future use and preservation of these resources and provide effective management.

Existing dams and impoundments provide habitat for our fish and wildlife, and most have been in place for decades and are part of the fabric of our fishery management and boating access programs.

As LD 531 is discussed the Department asks that a full understanding of regulatory authorities are part of the discussion, and to the extent possible ensure that there are clear lines of authorities for managing public access, fish passage, fishery management in our lakes, ponds and streams are considered.

Department staff will be available during the work session to answer questions related to specific authorities of the Department.