

# SUPPORT

**NRCM Supports: An Act to Protect Maine's Clean Water and Taxpayers from Mining Pollution**

## **Support LD 820:** *An Act to Protect Maine's Clean Water and Taxpayers from Mining Pollution*

### **Sponsored by:**

Sen. Carson of Cumberland

### **Co-Sponsored by:**

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and Rep. Pierce of Dresden

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### **Summary:**

This bill would ban mines in, on, or under public lands; ban the dangerous parts of mines from floodplains; ban mines under lakes, rivers, coastal waters, and wetlands; require mining companies to pay enough money up front, as determined by a third party, to a trust to clean up a worst-case environmental disaster; strengthen the definition of "mining area"; limit groundwater pollution in mining areas (current statute allows unlimited groundwater pollution in mining areas); and require that any future changes to Maine's mining rules receive an affirmative vote from both houses of the Legislature.

### **Explanation:**

Maine people depend on clean water to support critical economic engines for our state: tourism, fishing, hunting, guiding, paddling, and many other activities. Wildlife watching, hunting, and fishing combined are worth about \$1.4 billion annually. Fishing alone is worth \$370 million per year. Maine lakes support about 52,000 jobs with an economic impact of \$3.5 billion annually. Weak mining laws and rules are a serious threat to our clean water and sustainable, job-creating industries that depend on a clean environment.

LD 820 addresses many of the biggest problems with the 2017 mining rules, particularly those the Department of Environmental Protection has repeatedly claimed it cannot address on its own through rulemaking. The provisions in LD 820, combined with key changes to the 2017 mining rules (see NRCM's position memo on LD 395), would give Maine strong and clear protections from mining pollution.

**NRCM supports LD 820**