



LAKES REGION CONSERVATION TRUST

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March 10, 2023

New Hampshire House of Representatives
State House
107 North Main St.
Concord, NH 03301

Re: House Bill 448

Dear Members of the House of Representatives:

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Lakes Region Conservation Trust (LRCT) to express the Board's opposition to House Bill 448 (proposed increase of the Lake Winnepesaukee daytime speed limit in the Broads from 45 miles per hour to 65 miles per hour) and any other weakening of the existing Winnepesaukee speed limit law that may be proposed.

LRCT is a non-profit, member-supported organization founded in 1979 and dedicated to the permanent protection, stewardship, and respectful use of lands that define the character of the Lakes Region and its quality of life. LRCT acquires and stewards land and conservation easements that encompass important natural and recreational assets—conserving critical wildlife habitat and diverse ecosystems, protecting natural landmarks and scenic landscapes, preserving community character, and providing outdoor recreational opportunities for people of all ages. To date, LRCT has conserved 167 properties totaling over 28,500 acres.

Since LRCT's founding, one of the organization's highest priorities has been conservation of lands on and near Lake Winnepesaukee to maintain the Lake's scenic beauty and natural heritage, protect the Lake's water quality and wildlife habitat, and provide opportunities for recreation for all.

A particularly significant project for LRCT has been conservation of Winnepesaukee shoreline and island properties as parts of "water trails"—routes that can be followed and places that can be viewed, visited, and enjoyed by everyone and particularly by paddlers. These properties—including Blanchard Island at the northern end of Moultonborough Bay, Five Mile Island in the Broads, Ragged Island near the geographic center of the Lake, and Stonedam Island off Meredith Neck—provide visitors with opportunities to explore, find a picnic spot or sandy beach, observe wildlife, and appreciate the Lake's scenery from new vantage points. LRCT has published a guide with maps of the properties and interesting routes to them, and we continue to work with landowners and other interested people to conserve additional Winnepesaukee properties that provide these natural and recreational values.

LRCT's properties on Lake Winnepesaukee are accessed by boaters from all parts of the Lake using all types of watercraft. A safe boating environment on the Lake is vitally important to the

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public's ability to visit and enjoy these lands and thus to the effectiveness and success of LRCT's land conservation efforts on the Lake and to LRCT's mission.

We believe that reasonable limits on boat speed are critical for the safety of all who want to use the Lake, including boaters in smaller motorboats, canoes, kayaks, and sailboats. This is particularly important given the significant increase in recent years in boating as a popular recreational activity and the Lakes Region as an even more desirable place to visit and live. We believe that weakening the existing law would be inconsistent with the policy expressed in RSA 270:1 that "the public waters of New Hampshire shall be maintained and regulated in such way as to provide for the safe and mutual enjoyment of a variety of uses, both from the shore and from water-borne conveyances [taking] into consideration the ... variety of special uses appropriate to our lakes, public safety, protection of environment and water quality, and the continued nurture of New Hampshire's threatened and endangered species." We believe that the existing speed limit law is important to ensuring that Lake Winnepesaukee, with its extraordinary natural qualities and recreational opportunities, continues to be a place that can be experienced and enjoyed safely by all.

For these reasons, we oppose House Bill 448 as well as any other change that would weaken the existing Winnepesaukee speed limit law.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Don Berry". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Donald S. Berry
President