

Good Morning,

My name is Rob Evans, and I'm the President of the Franklin Watershed Committee, Vice President for the Lake Carmi Campers Association and a member of the lake carmi TMDL Coordination Team. I am have been the owner of a camp on Lake Carmi for 14 years and have raised my (3) children on its shores. I am proud to say that I have established some wonderful friendships with other camp families, with members of the Franklin Select Board, with members of the Franklin Community, our farming families, and many state water quality professionals with whom I have worked.

I first want to say thank you to this committee, for supporting our clean water efforts. While I know that maintaining clean water is, and will continue to be a state priority, we are grateful for your continued support for our clean water initiatives. Over the past several years I have witnessed that Lake Carmi has been ground zero for the state's clean water work. The extensive algae blooms we experienced several years ago, the public outcry, the fear and anxiety over the health risks associated with these blooms, the tensions between our campers, town residents, farming community and elected officials, boiled over into some very heated debates about how to manage this critical clean water dilemma.

I also want to express how grateful we are for the collaboration we have had with the Department of Environmental Conservation. I want to give heartfelt shout out to Oliver Pearson and his team, who have spent countless hours on the ground, gathering and analyzing data, talking with stakeholders, speaking with community memebtrs and sharing their professional perspectives on our lake. I also want to say that while we may

not always agree with those who are impacting our watershed, I do feel that through a lot of soul searching, self reflection and a lot of hard work, our relationships across all sectors are much better today, than they have been in the past.

As many of you know, DEC developed a TMDL for Lake Carmi back in 2008... for over 13 years we have been working hard to meet the goals and objectives of this TMDL but unfortunately, we are far from reaching our desired outcomes. To highlight the crisis of where we find ourselves today, in 2018, due to a number of factors, the Legislature designated Lake Carmi as a Lake in Crisis, which required the development of state crisis response plan and the identification of critical pathway projects to address the continuing water quality challenges that we have been experiencing.

Since the Lake in Crisis designation, we have seen a tremendous amount of work being done in the watershed that has included,

- The deployment of an in-lake aeration system consisting of 80 diffusers, that pump oxygen into the bottom of the lake in an effort to enhance mixing of the water and reduce the extent of the algae blooms we have been experiencing. While this was an important step, the system has failed to meet our desired water quality outcomes.
- Our farm community has deployed a manure injection system designed to reduce the overland manure spreading in our watershed.
- Working with our camper community, we have increased our education and outreach work to reduce the impacts of shoreland erosion, septic systems and private road and driveways.
- With the help of our friends at the University of Vermont and other state scientists in a number of state agencies, we are collecting an enormous amount of data on in-lake, tributary, ground water and soil

sample data that will lead to development of science based strategies to help us meet our clean water goals.

Through the work of many of those mentioned above we are at a unique time to have a feasibility study being planned for lake carmi this summer, to determine if an alum treatment or other water quality interventions can be applied to improve the water quality at Lake Carmi... if the bill passed were to put a moratorium on these applications, it will significantly limit our ability to mitigate the harmful blue green algae blooms we have been experiencing...

We have leaned heavily on the state's experts to guide us through this process. While at times we have done our own research and analysis about the lake, we have found the Department of Environmental Conservation and their lakes and ponds staff and those with whom they collaborate to be professional and subject matter experts in their fields. We see no reason for the state to change the framework and systems that are already in place to assess, manage and review the application of any substances that might be delivered to improve the water quality in our lakes, streams and ponds across the state. While I do agree that government oversight is needed and required at times... this is NOT the time... the current systems in place serve all Vermonters and the moratorium in H31 if passed would only reduce the proven, safe and data supported resources at the state's disposal and would inflict harm for those that live and breathe the air around the lake that is often filled with the stench of our significant algae blooms and place roadblocks to the significant and impactful work being done to address our water quality crisis at lake carmi. We feel strongly the best action would be allow to the existing making process to continue with DEC and their identified stakeholders and subject matter experts.

So coming full circle....Lake Carmi hosts the state's largest park, is home to great walleye fishing, is uniquely settled just south of the Canadian border and in some ways, is a mirror image of lakes across Vermont. But since joining the lake carmi community 14 years ago, not a summer has gone by that we did not experience algae blooms that last from late July until the October/November time frame. The impacts of these blooms have led to financial, health and property value concerns that continue to raise the alarm for all of us. For a state that is such an outspoken environmental advocate, we need to make the commitment to continue to prioritize our clean water efforts and support the existing personnel, systems and structures that care take for our state waterways.

On behalf of our campers association, watershed committee and our clean water partners, I again want to ask you to not pass a bill that puts a moratorium in place or changes the current approval process for these types of application interventions in any way. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today.