



Members dedicated to protecting lakes

January 19, 2012

Senator Bob Odell, Chair  
Energy and Natural Resources Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 102  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

**Subject: SB 224: AN ACT relative to lead fishing sinkers and jigs.**

Dear Chairman Odell and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the New Hampshire Lakes Association (NH LAKES), a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the state's lakes and their watersheds, I want to thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today in support of SB 224. NH LAKES represents over 1400 individual and family members, and 150 associations and private businesses. This legislation and its purpose is currently our highest priority. We think that it is a modest change in the law, one that will have few if any negative impacts, but one that we are confident will reduce loon mortality.

By changing the means by which we measure lead jigs, setting that prohibitive standard at one ounce, we will save the lives of many loons for years to come. The loon is of course not just a bird that holds a special place in our hearts and minds; it is also an indicator species – one whose population gives us important information about the condition of our lakes and ponds and the health of our environment. The loon could be considered our biological sentinel, a harbinger of environmental degradation and the potential loss of clean, safe water.

The science behind the lethal effects of lead on loons is clear –when they eat it they die. This change in the law is essential to reducing loon mortality. We recognize, however, that beyond the science and this modest amendment to the law, a greater educational effort will be needed. We are committed to working with our members and our partners to implement this educational initiative and believe that SB 224 and an ongoing education program together will provide the outcomes that we can all aspire to; a healthy loon population and clean and healthy lakes and ponds in New Hampshire.

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 224 and for your careful consideration of the merits of this Bill.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom O'Brien, President  
New Hampshire Lakes Association