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1 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

Paul R. LePage
GOVERNOR

2 July 2018

The 128th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, ME

Dear Honorable Members of the 128th Legislature:

Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing LD 40, " An Act To Strengthen Requirements for Water Testing for Schools."

Limiting exposure to lead is important to public health, and while the aim of the legislation was to ensure that students are not exposed to lead in drinking water in the schools, the final product does not give clear direction on the initiative. This bill seeks to tie a public health-related issue properly overseen by DHHS with financial funding overseen by the Department of Education.

Schools on private wells are currently tested for lead. Schools that feed off a public water system are not. DHHS's responsibility is only to the public system and not the fixtures inside buildings that feed off that system.

The testing of schools on these public water systems is the responsibility of local school districts. DHHS currently offers testing for free to schools that find themselves in this position, and it is up to the school districts to ensure this testing is done.

If testing reveals there is a lead issue, DOE has a revolving renovation fund to provide loans to school districts to remediate the problem.

LD 40 is unnecessary and makes complicated what is a straightforward method already in place for addressing this issue. If schools are unwilling to take advantage of free testing and the remediation funding now available to ensure proper public health, another statute is not going to make them do it.

For these reasons, I return LD 40 unsigned and vetoed. I strongly urge the Legislature to sustain it.

Sincerely,

Paul R. LePage
Governor



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