

# Testimony In Support of LD906

## An Act To Provide Passamaquoddy Tribal Members Access to Clean Drinking Water

February 17, 2022

To whom it may concern,

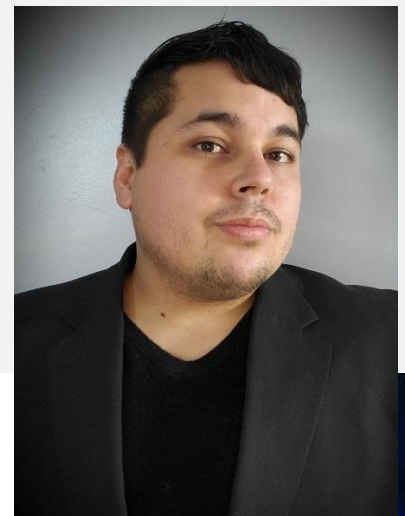
I am writing this testimony in support of LD906. I am in support of LD906 for multiple reasons. One reason being that I have lived on the Passamaquoddy Pleasant Point (Sipayik) Reservation since May 2013 and have been able to experience drinking water issues first hand. During this time living on the Pleasant Point Reservation I have experienced periods of bad drinking water quality mixed in with periods of what appeared to be better drinking water quality. From my observation and experiences, the bad water quality had occurred annually from Late Spring/Early Summer into Early Fall. These issues would come and go but usually lasted around a week per event. The types of issues that occurred in this time period were discolored water that was often a yellowish tea color and sometimes a light brown. During the past 6 years I have noticed there would sometimes be a chlorine like odor during these events and the slight odor would last for a week or two. I have also experienced rashes and dry skin from showering during these discoloration events and for up to a week after. Due to the potential of bad drinking water quality on the Pleasant Point Reservation I will not use the water for cooking or hydration during the Late Spring, Summer and Early fall.

Another reason I am in support of LD906 is that I have dealt with the Pleasant Point Drinking water as a Passamaquoddy Tribal Employee in the Sipayik Environmental Department since June 2012. My current job title is the Water Quality Program Environmental Technician. My job duties also have me work in the capacity as the Water Quality Program Manager. My regular job duties primarily focuses on surface water. Community drinking water issues have been increasingly becoming part of my work duties. In the Past drinking water issues were reported by community members but not as frequently as the present time. In the past the Sipayik Environmental Department was involved in a study into a potential groundwater drinking water resource near the Pleasant Point Reservation. More recently during the last 6 years drinking water issues were reported to the Sipayik Environmental Department more regularly by Pleasant Point community members.

With increasing public outcry and community members having similar complaints and experiences as each other the Sipayik Environmental

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Department have done more drinking water actions. The Sipayik Environmental was involved in a Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) drinking water study of metals for the Pleasant Point (Sipayik) and Eastport Maine. A new drinking water site has been installed as an enclosed well water pump site on tribal land. After the drinking water well site gets approved for use it will provide a place for community members to collect drinking water from by turning on a faucet.

The current drinking water study I am involved with as a Sipayik Environmental Department employee is the EPA Environmental Justice Small Grant for the Passamaquoddy Tribe of Pleasant Point. This grant will be used to collect drinking water data from various households, public and government buildings on the Passamaquoddy Pleasant Point Reservation. The Environmental Justice Small grant will also be used to have community input and data collected about their drinking water and develop a community action plan as it relates to the Pleasant Point Reservations drinking water.

As a Sipayik Environmental Department employee I am also involved with collecting drinking water samples to test for Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) and Color. I have learned from working in my official title is that there is a Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) problem periodically in the community drinking water. This is an issue due to some Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) are considered a probable human carcinogen. This issue had come to the departments attention by drinking water notices handed out by the local water district. Recently, as a Sipayik Environmental Department employee I had collected water samples in September 2021 that were mailed to an independent lab and most the samples tested above the threshold for Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM). This was concerning due to this test had taking place while the water had appeared clear and not tea colored during this random test. From my work experiences I have learned that many community members in Pleasant Point have drinking water problem similar to what I have experiences personally. Some have even reported even worse issues than I have experienced.

It is my belief that LD906 would greatly help provide the framework that the Passamaquoddy Tribe could use successfully to complete the goal to have quality drinking water available for all community members on the Passamaquoddy Pleasant Point Reservation.

Sincerely,

William M. Longfellow