

Testimony against H 5174 and H 8055

Regarding bills:

2023 - H 5174

2022 - H 8055

RE: Dear Members of the Town Council,

My husband and I have lived full-time on Baker Road in Portsmouth for more than 20 years, and we are extremely alarmed about two bills before you, and what they would do to our security, and to our right to live peacefully in our homes.

On Baker Road, our homes are on extremely small lots that have experienced erosion over the years, so much so that most of us have had to spend fortunes to build up major rock support on the water side of our properties -- with professionally engineered and installed sea walls. Ours cost more than \$80,000! This is money we had to borrow through an equity loan on our house, and several of our neighbors have had to do the same. But if we didn't invest in these sea walls, our homes would be at great risk from erosion, storm damage, and rising-water challenges.

High tide now hits our sea walls. According to the bills before you, if you were to pass them, this would mean that non-residents would have the right to walk six feet into our property! This is only about 20 feet from our back doors! This would destroy our privacy, and it would be extremely unsafe, as it would mean in our case that we would not be able to leave our back doors and windows open to get any breeze. We'd have to keep them closed and locked against intruders or uninvited "visitors" walking in our yards.

Our small lot size is exactly the same as almost every one of our neighbors' on the street. These lots are so small, that the water side offers very little buffer from the beach. There are many waterfront homes in Portsmouth experiencing the same erosion, and rising-water problems, and who, like us, would be very burdened by these bills.

We implore you to vote against these two bills. Portsmouth already offers more than 80 terrific locations with beautiful public access to the water, as well as the safe parking to enjoy most of them. Portsmouth is about to make a lovely public park under the Mount Hope Bridge, which will be a great addition to our town's residents. No one needs these two new bills. We vehemently don't want these bills. These bills would damage our property values, and ruin our security in our own homes.

Thank you for considering our concerns, and please, please vote NO.

Sincerely yours,

Bernadette & Douglas Bernon