

Rosemarie Rung: McConkey's misleading on work on cyanobacteria blooms

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To the editor:

In a recent mass campaign text message sent by Rep. Mark McConkey, he takes credit for legislative work to address cyanobacteria blooms. Much of what he says is extremely misleading and the claim that he was "a leader on this issue in the House" is just plain false.

Let me set the record straight. I have successfully sponsored several bipartisan bills to get the state to address the growing problem of cyanobacteria blooms: finalizing a state cyanobacteria management plan (HB 1066), requiring functioning septic systems within shoreland protection zones (HB 1113), strengthening enforcement of the Shoreland Protection Act (HB 1103), and codifying cyanobacteria within the NH Clean Lakes Program (HB 1143).

A bill I cosponsored to restrict the use of phosphorus fertilizers passed the House and Senate but was recently vetoed by the governor. The bill I sponsored to create a \$25 million cyanobacteria mitigation fund was killed by House Finance Committee, but added to the budget with \$1.

I asked Sen. Jeb Bradley to increase that to \$2 million, he cut that request to \$1 million, but came back in the second year of the term, with McConkey as co-sponsor, to add the other \$1 million.

At no time during the legislative process of my bills did McConkey testify in favor of them, let alone co-sponsor them. He may have voted on them, but so did hundreds of other legislators. The only interaction I had with McConkey was to introduce, as a professional courtesy, two of his bills to my committee when he failed to appear. Our last interaction is when he spoke on the House floor in opposition to my position that the state should not be allowed to transfer maintenance costs of a state road to the my town of Merrimack.

Rep. Rosemarie Rung

Merrimack