

Dear Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

Good Afternoon Mr Chairman and Committee members. My Name is Jess Whittemore and I have lived in the Town of Friendsville for over forty four years. I served on the Town Council for a combined 20 years and the present Council trusted me as their economic river liaison for this and many other River issues. The Town of Friendsville is against the passage of SB 837, Friendsville would appreciate an unfavorable committee report on this Bill for the following reasons:

- It could easily have a negative effect on whitewater dam releases as the dam operator Brookfeild Renewable Power and MDE have made clear to us especially on spring drought years.
- Friendsville highly values the economic and social benefits of whitewater releases. We depend on the scheduled whitewater release for Tourism and our growing population of whitewater enthusiast citizens. Risking the un-interrupted schedule is highly undesirable.
- Deep Creek Lake Watershed Foundation requested a Brookfeild permit change with MDE. The Foundations permit change request lacked evidence to support the study that required a one month low lake level.
- MDE denied the Foundation's request for lack of evidence.
- If MDE found that the request had merit they would have asked all DCL stakeholders for input which never happened.
- it appears that the Foundation circumvented MDE and solicited local politicians to intervene. This resulted in the creation of SB 837 without full DCL stakeholder participation or consideration, including the Town of Friendsville.
- SB 837 circumvents the respectful, lawful and thorough review of Brookfield's permit impact as well as impact on other DCL stakeholders including Friendsville that a MDE review process would have afforded us.
- Friendsville would appreciate an unfavorable committee report on this Bill
- Thank you for your time it is most appreciated.