

To The Marine Resource Committee, Once again we the Marine worm harvesters are here defending our industry against those who would not only encroach on it but would essentially eradicate it !

For more than forty years I have had the comfort and confidence of knowing that if things got rough financially I always had the option of going worming ,now with the advent of shore leases that option is very apt to come to an end ,not just an end in certain towns but very quickly all towns !

These Town Clam committees are by their respective titles only interested in controlling their respective mud flats for the clams that are there .

These laws that are proposed are nothing more in my opinion an incremental approach to achieve what LD 1452 couldn't and that is to give complete ownership and control of the mud flats of these Towns to the clam harvesters and their respective committees. it also gives them the option to become Aquaculture Lessees and to not only control clam harvesting but periwinkles, seaweed, mussels etc. making any disturbance of the flats illegal essentially creating a monopoly !

This new legislation in my opinion is a back door approach to Give town clam conservation committees the above stated control .Its like "we didn't get what we wanted last time so We will take it a piece at a time "

I think the time has come for the people of The State of MAINE to take back what by law is each citizens Right ! The ownership and control of our Marine resources ,so that all who wish to may earn a living from the resource of their choice or just get a meal from them without worrying about breaking a law .

According to Title 12 The Department of Marine Resources are holding a public Trust in protection for the public's interest ,no where was I able to find in said Law was it supposed to be held for clamming and clam harvesters ONLY .

It saddens and amazes me that two industries that have co-existed for a hundred years or more with little or no dissention should become a Political Battle Ground where by "The Winners " get to go to work ,and the losers get to stay home and look for a job !

It is a sad thing to see when a group of harvesters get led down the "prim rose path " by thinking that they are doing something to enhance their industry ,only to find down the road a bit that they are no longer independent harvesters but are employees for some aquafarming project .

It is also an odd thing that many clam harvesters if because of too much rain or psp closes the flats to clam harvesting ,pick up their "worm " hoes and go worming ,but unfortunately the same cant be said for the worm harvester ,because of Town ordinances and fees for town licenses.

BOTH industries are viable ,Both industries are biologically sound ,The exclusionary politics of the proponents of these L D's IE> 1452,178,and 255 are an attempt at privatization of resources that are constitutionally "OWNED" by ALL citizens of OUR STATE .

Respectfully submitted ,

Fred B Johnson