



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002

(207) 287-1400

TTY: (207) 287-4469

James S. Gillway

79 Bowen Road

Searsport, ME 04974

Residence: (207) 548-6429

Cell Phone: (207) 323-3250

James.Gillway@legislature.maine.gov

Testimony for LD 491

"An Act To Lower from 70 to 65 the Age at Which a Person May Obtain a Lobster and Crab Fishing License for a Reduced Fee"

Representative James Gillway

Good Afternoon, I thank the committee chairs Senator Baker, Representative Kumiega and honorable members of the Committee on Marine Resources for the opportunity to present LD 491. I am the Representative for District 98 representing Winterport, Frankfort, Swanville and Searsport. I live and work in Searsport.

I received a call over a year ago from a constituent requesting that I submit this piece of legislation. He currently holds a commercial license and fishes a small number of traps alone in the Penobscot bay. When he explained the nature of his request and his end goal, I will admit, it seemed very complicated. But one element of his explanation seemed very simple to me. He would like to see us reduce the age for getting a reduced fee commercial lobster and crab license from 70 to 65 years of age. My constituent could not be here today because he is working. He would like to retire but, like many Mainers, can not afford to. He fishes now to supplement his income. His retirement plan is to retire from the nine to five world and continue to fish to make ends meet. He knows that he will only have a limited number of years to enjoy the benefit of a reduced fee license and hopes not to have to fish into his seventies. We should all be aware that there are a lot of people who know they have to work in retirement and this bill will give a special few with fishing skills the chance to do what they love while they are still healthy enough to do so.

My wife's father and several uncles were and are still lobster fishermen down in Stonington. Her grandfather worked in the industry for over fifty years. After doing the research needed for this legislation, I have a better understanding and admiration of them. Beyond the fact that the job itself is hard the rules and regulations in place for the industry are very complicated.