



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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March 18, 2015

**Testimony of Rep. Walter Kumiega
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources
LD 492, An Act to Expand Eligibility for Lobster and Crab Fishing Licenses for Veterans**

Senator Baker and fellow members of the Committee on Marine Resources - I am Representative Walter Kumiega, serving Vinalhaven, North Haven, Isle au Haut, Stonington, Deer Isle, Southwest Harbor, Tremont, Swans Island, the Cranberry Isles and Frenchboro. I am here today to present **LD 492, An Act to Expand Eligibility for Lobster and Crab Fishing Licenses for Veterans.**

The bill as drafted would make veterans that held a lobster/crab license before or during their service eligible for a new license. I am concerned that in zones with long waiting lists that would be seen as unfair so I would suggest that if the committee wishes to move the bill forward that it should be amended to a waiver of the apprentice program requirements.

The Marine Resources Committee of 126th Legislature spent significant time on the issue of veteran's exemptions and I believe did very good work to make it easier for people to move from a fishing career to the military and back. We made changes to the student program and simplified the process for someone to retain a license while they served their country. We did not do any retroactive legislation to make things right for veterans that did not retain licenses under the old system. That is the purpose of this bill.

Thank you for your time, I would be happy to attempt to answer any questions.