

March 18, 2015

My name is Alan Lazaro from Vinalhaven and I am a Life Long resident of Maine. After I graduated from Vinalhaven High School in the summer of 1985 I enlisted in the Navy that August. I served in five squadrons, two bases and served in the First Gulf war. I received Three Navy Commendation Medals, Five Navy Achievement Medals, 5 Good Conduct Medals, National Defense Service Medal, Southwest Asia Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Medal, 2 Kuwait Liberation medals and various other medals and commendations. I am not saying this to brag, I'm stating this to show I served with honor and deserve the right to fish. During my youth all the way until I enlisted I was lobstering in Vinalhaven. The Last year I held a licence was 1996 with 800 tags. I had a boat and fished while stationed in Brunswick. I intended to get out and move back to Vinalhaven full time. After much reflection I decided to continue serving our country and State. I was told that you had to have a boat registered to maintain your licence. I could not afford to keep paying for my boat, Licence and tags on E-5 pay so I let my licence go. I thought that if I served our country I would be able to get my licence back after being Honorably discharged, I was wrong. If I had it to do over I would have just kept paying. The way I see it I should be able to get my licence back without going threw the apprenticeship program.

Things to consider form My point of view!

- 1) I served our country and state for 22 Years helping preserve the rights of all Lobstermen to make a living.
- 2) While serving those years, I paid Maine State taxes remaining Loyal to My State. I could have claimed a no tax state and save a lot of money!
- 3) I had a Lobster Licence before many of the current fishermen were born.
- 4) When fishermen get sent to jail for various reasons they do not lose their licence. We have had people I know of caught with 60 or 70 short lobsters and they still get to fish!
- 5) Lobstermen are allowed to have other Jobs but we cant be a lobsterman that is not fair.

I know one of the sticking points with the council was that people that served more than 6 years had chosen the military as a career and thus did not qualify to hold a licence. Here is why that thinking is flawed. If you do not serve 20 years and you get out, you do not get anything when get discharged. And even if you get discharged after twenty years as an enlisted man it is not enough to live on. I rose the the rank of Senior Chief Petty Officer the second highest rank for enlisted and 22 years of service and after taxes my monthly check is \$2100.00. This does make things easier but it is not enough to provide for my family of 5. I am not asking for a hand out, I'm only asking to be able to help provide for my family.

Thank you for Your service and I hope you recognize mine.

Thanks for your consideration on this matter.

Very Respectfully,
Alan C. Lazaro AMCS(AW), USN(RET)