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**Testimony of Nancy Smith, Executive Director of GrowSmart Maine
In Support of LD 493,
“An Act To Create the Ocean Acidification Council”
March 11, 2015**

Senator Baker, Representative Kumiega and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources, my name is Nancy Smith and I am the Executive Director of GrowSmart Maine. I regret that I cannot attend this hearing today.

We are a statewide non-profit, membership-based organization working to improve Maine's economy, protect its distinctive character and communities, and enhance our state's quality places. We believe this bill makes headway in achieving these objectives.

Ocean acidification is a growing concern for Maine fisheries. The potential impacts of acidification will be felt all along Maine's coast; in our fisheries, fishing families and our coastal communities. This impact of course will extend across Maine as well because of the economic impact of this issue, focusing on commercial harvested and grown species.

There is great value in this proposed council, with its charge to gather and review scientific information to evaluate the direct and indirect effects of coastal and ocean acidification, identify gaps in this knowledge, and recommend protocols to mitigate coastal and ocean acidification; all building on the recent efforts of the 2014 Commission To Study the Effects of Coastal and Ocean Acidification and Its Existing and Potential Effects on Species That Are Commercially Harvested and Grown Along the Maine Coast

I learned long ago that Maine's quality of place doesn't end at our shores. The Gulf of Maine is a component of the environment that is critical to Maine's communities and economy. Fisheries matter.