

My name is Michael E Murphy II from Machiasport, ME and I am here to oppose this bill. In the years gone by it has always been 5 ½ foot dredge on both urchins statewide and for scallops in Cobscook Bay. The 5 ½ foot dredge law never saved the urchins, and with 5 ½ foot dredges we have been known to overfish Coobscook Bay. It is my opinion that the 5 ½ foot dredge is not a management tool. Currently the scallop fisheries is limited to 15 gallons per day and I believe that it is in the best interest to get that limit as quickly as possible, using the larger dredge is the most efficient way to do that. This would result in less damage to the smaller scallops as well as to the scallop habitat.

As far as the 90 lb per day limit I also oppose this recommendation. I believe that with a 90 lb limit that most vessels will sail to Cobscook Bay for the opening part of the season therefore forcing that area to close within the first month. This would cause hard times for the people that only fish in Cobscook Bay. The 90 lb limit would also force captains to cut their crew down to 1 stern man vs the 2 that most have now which not only would eliminate jobs but also could cause dangerous situations.

I oppose the license eligibility portion of the bill because at this point I don't believe that the fisheries has been rebuilt enough to warrant open access. I support a limited entry program like the one that is enforced in the lobster industry, but oppose the license eligibility in subsequent years portion of the bill. I don't believe that holding a license in past years should put a person at the head of a list.

Sincerely Yours

Michael E Murphy II