

127th Legislature
Senate of
Maine
Senate District 6

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Testimony of Senator David Burns before the Joint Standing Committee on Marine
Resources

April 27, 2015

In Support of LD 800, *An Act to Prevent Passage of Alewives through the Grand
Falls Dam on the St. Croix River*

Senator Baker, Representative Kumiega, distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources, my name is David Burns and I represent Senate District 6 which includes all of Washington County and communities in Hancock County. I submit this testimony in support of LD 800, *An Act to Prevent Passage of Alewives through the Grand Falls Dam on the St. Croix River*.

I am very proud to represent some of the most beautiful and economically productive ocean coastline in New England as well as some of the most pristine and best sport fishing lakes in our State. If you are an avid fisherman you probably have fished Grand Lake Stream, West Grand Lake or one of the six large lakes above West Grand. If you're not an avid fisherman, surely you have heard of their reputations. I am very concerned that the native land locked salmon population in these lakes, and our ability as a State to properly stock and maintain a healthy land locked salmon population in most of our other lakes, will be in jeopardy if we do not pass LD 800.

I don't base my opinion on my experience or scientific knowledge but on the science and experience of those scientists and biologists that have spent decades studying this species here in Maine. You will hear testimony from such people during this hearing and I ask you to listen closely to them, consider their experience, knowledge and factual data. Some you will hear from, such as retired Salmon Biologist Richard Jordan, have absolutely nothing to gain for advocating for passage of this bill. That is an important consideration.

In years past Washington County used to be the White Tail Deer hunting and sport fishing capital of the State. Unfortunately our deer population was decimated over the years by various natural and human elements. We are working hard to remedy that loss. Fortunately, our fresh water fishing industry, like our ocean fisheries, is a substantial part of our economy. I am told that 75% of Maine's land lock salmon stocking come from the Grand Lake Stream hatchery. Our salmon fishing lakes attribute to a \$300 to \$450 million economy in Maine each year. Legislators- it is our responsibility to protect this industry. Please vote positively on LD 800.

Thank you