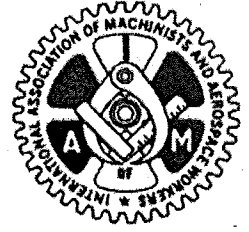


# Maine Lobstering Union

## Local 207



PO BOX 1505, Scarborough, ME 04074

April 10, 2019

Sen. Carson, Rep. Tucker and Distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources:

My name is Virginia Olsen, I am a lobstermen and Union member from Stonington, and I am submitting testimony in support of LD 1287.

I fish in part of Penobscot Bay, you may not be aware that a portion of the bay has been closed to lobstering due to mercury contamination from the HoltraChem debacle. Maine prides itself on our pristine waters and sustainable lobster fishery. Continued dredging will continue to close grounds to fishing. This bill does two things:

- 1) It makes sure the criteria for sediment testing when dealing with mercury is always done the same way. This is an over simplification.... It really identifies how much mercury is located at what depths so the proper precautions can be taken. We would use the same protocols developed by the federal court's experts who did the Penobscot River Mercury Study.
- 2) It limits the amount of dredging in this area to only what is necessary for navigation and existing infrastructure and mercury remediation. Limiting the excessive dredging will leave the mercury covered where it is now, doing the least amount of damage to the lobster fishery.

This is common sense legislation, I hope you feel just as strongly as I do about it. Whenever a dredging project comes up, they want to dump the spoils back into the bay. I can't tell you the number of days I have missed fishing to go to hearings on dredge spoils being dumped in the middle of Penobscot bay. You have all seen the ocean current maps from the oil and natural gas hearing a few weeks back. These contaminated spoils don't go to bottom, they are suspended and circulate with the tide. LD 1287 would protect our oceans from unnecessary mercury contamination. Please stand with the lobstermen and support this bill. I thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Virginia Olsen  
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