

## Macklin, Heather

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**From:** Sandy Thompson <sandyttt309@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2015 3:26 PM  
**To:** bakersenate14@yahoo.com; Kumiega, Walter  
**Cc:** Macklin, Heather  
**Subject:** In Support: LD 493, "An Act to Create the Ocean Acidification Council."

Dear Members of the Marine Resources Committee,

I am Sandy Thompson of Freeport, Maine supporting LD 493.

Impacts of ocean acidification (OA) are currently threatening Maine's marine resources and the establishment of the Ocean Acidification Council (OAC) is an important step which will facilitate solutions in protecting and mitigating these impacts.

Concerning the powers and duties listed in sub-section 8, economic opportunities for new businesses and technologies exist today- not in the future- and these need to be highlighted and prioritized in establishing the council. Certainly more data and research studies are needed but at the same time new aquaculture businesses need to be encouraged because aquaculture (e.g., seaweed and oyster/mussel) has been proven to mitigate the impacts of ocean acidification. Not only would aquaculture businesses improve coastal economies but also would improve coastal waters. This is one of the best examples of a win-win: win for the economy and win for the environment. How does Maine make this win-win happen? What actions are needed to make economic development a priority - a center piece of the council's work? My ideas are as follows.

1. Amend sub-section 2 by adding at least one member from the Department of Economic and Community Development. There may be other business development organizations (Maine Technology Institute, etc.) that may also be included.
2. Amend the bill to establish a working group or sub-committee of the OAC comprised of the members from: Department of Environment Protection (DEP), Department of Marine Resources (DMR), Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, and Department of Economic and Community Development and owners of aquaculture businesses (Stakeholders) with the sole priority to simplify the permitting process for small aquaculture businesses. DEP currently has "permit-by-rule" for shoreland zoning (as well as other programs) and this approach could be used for small aquaculture businesses.

My personal experience in starting a small manufacturing business using recycled materials illustrates the importance of this point. I had worked in technical and senior management positions (including Deputy Commissioner) in DEP for 18 years and after leaving the Department I wanted to start a business making a product containing recycled materials. Yet when I wanted to use

a "waste" material (silica) that had no environmental risks associated with it, I was told that a permit would be needed. Estimates for obtaining a permit was \$5,000 to \$7,000 (1996). Because I understood how to navigate the regulatory system and how to explain the "environmental risks" of the waste material I wanted to use, I was successful in being able to manufacture a product containing recycled materials - without obtaining a permit. It seems intuitive that DEP would encourage recycling-reuse of waste materials to keep them out of the disposal path - but DEP placed unintentional barriers in the way - without understanding that they were doing so. Similarly, DMR, may unintentionally place barriers in the establishment of small aquaculture businesses - which at this time we need more of because they can immediately begin mitigating the negative impacts of OA on our coastal waters.

Also, Maine aquaculture has incredible growth potential. The Maine brand has national and international demand at this time and demand will continue to grow. Thus, the timing is right to start increasing the amount of seaweed and oysters/mussels Maine produces. For more information on the economic value of seaweed go

to: <http://www.screencast.com/users/pcollinsgmri/folders/Sea%20State%2010.0> This link is a slide-audio presentation by FMC\* of Rockland given at the Gulf of Maine Research Institute in 2015. Some of the points made: [In growing seaweed,] "no inputs like fertilizer, pesticides are needed. The only input is labor—which we (Maine) have a lot available along the coast"; "We need more kelp farmers to meet national demand. Maine seaweed is a quality product and can demand higher prices."

I was not able to attend the public hearing in person. Please contact me if you would like additional information or have questions.

Thank you.

[\* Since 1936, FMC has been one of the world's leading seaweed-based businesses; link for more information: [About FMC](#) ]