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Subject: Please forward to Marine Resources committee

Date: Sun, Apr 30, 2017 7:25 pm

April 30th, 2017

Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources,

My name is Valy Steverlynck. My husband and I have been growing years in Freeport for almost two decades.

I write to express my full support for LD 1438. As a grower who has lived through wait-times of two years to get an aquaculture lease application processed and approved, I strongly support the Department of Marine Resources's proposal to double the length of a lease, thus reducing the amount of administrative work on their staff by half -and in turn expediting the lease processing time. In the spirit of reducing processing times, the idea of allowing for limited lease expansions makes good sense.

I am also very much in favor of requiring LPA applicants to take a course to learn about responsible shellfish aquaculture. Biosecurity is a major concern for established growers who fear that uneducated newcomers may unwittingly spread disease that could wipe out sectors of the industry.

There are a few amendments that I would like to see included in the bill:

1. Allow for lease expansions greater than 10% (25% is more reasonable) ;
2. Eliminate the need for applicants to get approval from all riparian owners supporting a lease expansion; and,
3. Give the Commissioner discretion in evaluating feedback from interested parties (instead of directing him/her to reject the request for a lease expansion if anyone objects).

I urge you to please vote "Ought to pass" to LD 1438, with the above amendments.

Sincerely,

Valy Steverlynck
Freeport