

Andrew Stevenson
Belfast
LD 586

Statement from Andrew Stevenson in support of LD-586

Hello and thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of LD-586, An Act to Protect Maine Fisheries from the Effects of Industrial Recirculating Aquaculture Operations.

My name is Andrew Stevenson and I live in Belfast, Maine. I appreciate the work that Senator Beebe-Center and her co-sponsors Senator Reny and Representative Salisbury have put into this initiative.

I support the overall intent and design of LD-586 because I believe it gives this legislature, Maine communities, and Maine businesses the opportunity to implement one of the very first “Third Wave” regulatory programs in the country.

Here’s what I mean by “Third Wave.”

The “First Wave” was the establishment of our national parks and public lands, started in Teddy Roosevelt’s time.

The “Second Wave” was the passing of the environmental protection laws in the 1970s and 1980s. I had a small part to play in that.

The First Wave was about conservation.

The Second Wave was about protection.

The Third Wave is about restoration.

Maine is ready for the Third Wave. Setting up a regulatory scheme for land-based aquaculture facilities is our first opportunity to show others what that could look like. We need regulatory regimes that permit sustainable facilities, not degrading ones.

This committee has an opportunity to craft a set of regulations to bring in land-based aquaculture operations that have no — or nearly no — pollution, that produce healthy products, and that generate jobs a worker can be proud to tell his children or her grandchildren about.

We know what the alternative to restorative regulations is: programs that attempt to limit resource over-exploitation and passing the costs of pollution cleanup from the polluter to the taxpayer. We had to start somewhere but we can’t stop.

We must take the next step.

We must establish restoration and sustainability as our regulatory objectives.

I spent the first 20 years of my professional life in environmental protection. I worked in U.S. EPA’s Office of Water, directed technical services for the Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies, ran a political affairs program for the Water Pollution Control Federation, and joined the Boston-based environmental engineering firm of Camp, Dresser & McKee when they opened FPC — the Federal Programs Corporation — to conduct Superfund clean-up projects around the country.

Strong, sound, and transparent regulatory programs benefit everyone. Set them up. Fund them well. Monitor the activities conducted under them. And enforce their provisions.

Thank you for your time and attention.