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March 16, 2023

Committee on Marine Resources
State House, Room 206
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: Testimony against LD 586 128 *An Act to Protect Maine Fisheries from the Effects of Industrial Recirculating Aquaculture Operations*

Senator Reny, Representative Hepler, Distinguished Members of the Committee on Marine Resources:

The Sunrise County Economic Council (SCEC) respectfully submits this testimony in opposition to LD 586 *An Act to Protect Maine Fisheries from the Effects of Industrial Recirculating Aquaculture Operations*. SCEC opposes LD 586 because it creates a standard regarding carbon emissions for recirculating aquaculture that no natural resource based industry could meet and would set a precedent regarding feed that would threaten future investments in our county's salmon industry. More generally, the precedents set by LD 586 would chill investment in the natural resource industries that provide a livelihood for thousands of Washington County families.

SCEC is a non-profit organization that works to create jobs and prosperity in Washington County; we are also the economic development arm of Washington County Government. SCEC strongly supports Kingfish Maine's proposed recirculating aquaculture facility in Jonesport and welcomes the over 70 permanent, year-round jobs it will create. Recirculating aquaculture represents an opportunity for our region that complements our existing natural resource industries of wild blueberries, hardwood pulp and tissue, and commercial fishing. Recirculating aquaculture facilities in Maine are already regulated by seventeen federal, regional, and state agencies as well as their municipality. The existing laws balance our communities' need for investment and jobs with protecting the health of our environment and our quality of life.

LD 586 states that a recirculating aquaculture operation may not "increase overall carbon emissions"; this a standard that no natural resource industry could meet including my own family's small farm. This will essentially cut off investment in recirculating aquaculture and send a message that undermines Washington County's natural resource industries as they compete for investment in the global economy.

LD 586's prohibition on feed containing "wild marine organisms" will make it impossible for Maine based recirculating aquaculture companies to compete while doing nothing to safeguard the world's oceans. The prohibition would also set a precedent that could threaten Washington County existing salmon industry that supports over 100 jobs in its hatcheries, ocean farming, and processing.

SCEC opposes LD 586 because it threatens investment and jobs in recirculating aquaculture without any benefit to our community and through its extreme approach, undermines investment in the natural resource industries that thousands of Washington County families rely on.

Thank you for your consideration of the economic impact of LD 586 to Washington County and your support of our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles J. Rudelitch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Charles J. Rudelitch, Esq.
Executive Director

cc: Senator Marianne Moore
Representative Kenneth Davis
Representative Anne Perry
Representative Tiffany Strout