



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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April 20, 2023

Testimony of Representative Morgan Rielly in opposition to
**LD 508, Resolve, Directing the Department of Environmental Protection to Review Its
Environmental Permitting Laws**
before the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Good afternoon Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. I am Representative Morgan Rielly, representing House District 127, which includes part of Westbrook. I cannot testify in person today, but I am submitting my written testimony **in opposition to LD 508**.

LD 508 was brought to my attention yesterday. I'm concerned that this legislation will enact regulatory changes that will further slow the leasing process and create additional permits, hurting our small aquaculture farms, like our oyster farmers. I am also worried this bill will have serious ramifications regarding our working waterfront with the potential to damage coastal and island communities' ability to diversify their economic base.

I also want to flag to the committee that **LD 508** will direct the DEP to consider whether on-water aquaculture should be subject to the same or similar regulatory regime as land-based aquaculture. These are two entirely different ecosystems, and the imposition of land management methods on the water could result in serious unintended ecological impacts. And marine aquaculture operations are already held to higher standards than those on land. The imposition of land use standards on marine leases might end up decreasing regulatory oversight, which could lead to state agencies using standards not meant for aquatic ecosystems.

I urge my colleagues on the Environmental and Natural Resources Committee to **please vote ought not to pass**. Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Morgan Rielly".