

Lawrence Pye
Bath
LD 1552

Chairman and Members of the Joint Standing Marine Resources Committee,
I am writing to testify in favor of LD 1552, "An Act to Create the Lobster Innovation Fund."

The Lobster Innovation Fund will serve as a critical tool in promoting the participation of harvesters in experimental gear trials. As we all know, the lobster fishery is a vital industry for the State of Maine, providing jobs and economic opportunities for countless Mainers. It is also an industry that faces challenges, including potential regulatory changes at the federal level.

To address these challenges, it is critical that we invest in innovative approaches to sustainably manage the lobster fishery. One key way to achieve this goal is through experimental gear trials, which allow harvesters to test new gear and practices in real-world conditions. However, it can be difficult to get enough participation from harvesters to make these trials truly successful.

The Lobster Innovation Fund will provide financial incentives for harvesters to participate in these trials, which will increase the chances of success for new innovations. By fostering collaboration between harvesters, scientists, and other stakeholders, the fund will help to ensure that new gear and practices are field-tested and workable by the industry. This will ultimately lead to a more sustainable lobster fishery for future generations, and help to avoid potentially draconian federal regulations that might not be suitable for Maine's lobster fishery.

In conclusion, I urge the members of the Joint Standing Marine Resources Committee to support LD 1552 and the creation of the Lobster Innovation Fund. By investing in innovation and promoting harvester participation in experimental gear trials, we can help to sustain the lobster fishery and ensure that this vital industry continues to thrive for years to come. Thank you for your attention to this important issue

Sincerely,

Lawrence R. Pye
Harvester, Small Point