

My name is Elizabeth Hall. I am the Administrative Assistant and Hatchery Technician for Muscongus Bay Aquaculture and Dodge Cove Marine Farm. I strongly **OPPOSE BILL LD64**

A massive concern with this proposition is the poachers/non leaseholders not having the ability, knowledge or incentive to follow through with requirements in place to protect consumers and public health. It is highly unlikely that a poacher/non leaseholder is going to be able to correctly identify the source of the oysters they are attempting to sell. If illness were to occur it would be nearly impossible for them to trace it back to it's true origin. This puts the entire aquaculture industry at risk.

The proposed change will mean that Marine Patrol will be required to invest more energy, time and money into surveying lease sites while already stretched thin and having asked the grower community for further funding on more than one occasion over the last 20 years. Potential poachers could take advantage of this gap in Marine Patrol coverage. Poaching from leases without proper investigation or repercussion. As a result, creating a climate of enablement. This alone would cause increased conflict between lease/LPA holders and harvesters. Without proper management and surveillance, nothing would stop harvesters from pushing boundaries that are already difficult to determine and maintain due to changing weather, tides, currents or equipment used.

In addition, is also highly unlikely that there are naturally cultchless oysters to be harvested due to their biology. It is far more likely that any unattached oysters outside of lease/LPA boundary markers or gear are aquaculture-raised and have been moved from their original lease/LPA site.

I see this proposed change being advantageous for no one other than the poachers/non-leaseholders, while furthering the stresses already on the Marine Patrol and risking the health of consumers and the industry.