

Eric Staples  
Swan's Island  
LD 1353

I am writing today in favor of LD 1353. As a fourth generation lobsterman and a long time member of the Swan's Island fisherman's coop I am happy to see that this bill even exists. As a child, growing up in the 80's and early 90's, I have seen so many commercial fishing opportunities disappear. A "lobster boat" used to have many uses. Scolloping and sea urchin tending are the big ones that come to mind with stories of mackerel and pogie fishing attached to those memories. The return of the menhaden to the area a few short years ago was like a gift from God. In a small town such as Swan's Island it was especially exciting. The opportunity to make a living in more than one fishery was something new for anyone my age or younger. I know many people, including myself, that saw the fish and the opportunity and started to invest in the fishery. The abundance of fish was too hard to deny and for the willing, it was a way to save money on bait and possibly make a little profit with the every looming threat of the doom of the lobster industry being ever present. I MUST add that I did not and do not meet the requirements of this bill to receive a license if passed. But I do know many who invested time and money and most of all effort, who should, and deserve to retain their license. Government overreach and regulations based on zero common sense seem to be the theme of todays America. The fish are here, they may move on as they have in the past, let these men and women work before it's too late. Sooner the better!