

Jonathan Iszard
Swans Island
LD 1231

Transportation Committee Members:

RE: LD 1231

My name is Jon Iszard, and my family maintains a summer residence on Swans Island (since 1976), in the section known as Island Retreat. I am the President of the Homeowners Association for Island Retreat, but I write to you now in my personal capacity.

It has come to my attention that the DOT has announced that the ferry service intends to transition its overnight berths to mainland terminals over the next few years. This would be a very consequential change in service to the island communities the system serves, and I wish to relate to you a personal story concerning the wisdom of the overnight island berthing policy that is presently in place, and which this legislation would support.

Back in the summer of 1994, when he was just two years old, my son Ethan got into my blood pressure medication without us knowing it, thinking it was candy. We noticed he was becoming lethargic, and after a quick search for the reason, discovered how he had poisoned himself. We made some calls and were quickly aboard the Swans Island ferry headed for a waiting ambulance in Bass Harbor. He had taken a potentially lethal dose, but he survived because the ferry was moving in minutes and able to get us to the waiting ambulance in Bass Harbor soon enough.

I understand the economic pressures that appear to have caused this change in berthing policy, but I shudder to think of the outcome of this emergency had such a change been made prior to that fateful evening in 1994.

I write to urge you to support this legislation to ensure that the island ferries remain berthed in their island locations whenever possible. My son is living proof that this practice saves lives.

Respectfully,

Jon Iszard