



MAINE

Lobstermen's Association, Inc.

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Against

LD 1477: An Act to Provide an Exemption from Pilotage Requirements for Passenger Ferry Service Between Bar Harbor, Maine and Yarmouth, Nova Scotia

April 18, 2025

Senator Nagle, Representative Crafts, and members of the Committee on Transportation. My name is Patrice McCarron, and I am the President and Executive Director of the Maine Lobstermen's Association (MLA). The MLA strongly opposes **LD 1477**, an Act to Provide an Exemption for Pilotage Requirements for Passenger Ferry Service between Bar Harbor, Maine and Yarmouth, Nova Scotia.

Maine lobstermen take extraordinary care in where they set their gear to avoid conflicts with vessels such as the high-speed ferry between Bar Harbor and Nova Scotia. They must be careful where they set their gear due to the risk of significant trap loss and the safety hazards posed by working around this type of fast-moving vessel.

State licensed pilots bring firsthand knowledge of local waters, fishing grounds, and working waterfront activity and their presence is a critical safeguard. Maine lobstermen rely on their skill and expertise when guiding vessels into our busy harbors. A federally licensed pilot, while qualified in a general sense, does not have the same specific, localized expertise that a Maine state-licensed pilot does.

Allowing high-speed ferries to transit Frenchman Bay without guidance from a professional Maine pilot poses a safety hazard to local fishing operations and would set a dangerous precedent that could impact how all commercial vessels operate in Maine waters.

The MLA opposed similar legislation when it was introduced in 2018 for these very reasons, and we urge you to vote ought not to pass on LD 1477.

Thank you for your consideration.