



Maine Lobstering Union

Local 207

150 Bar Harbor Rd., Trenton, ME 04605



By Lobstermen, For Lobstermen

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and honorable members of the committee on Environment and Natural Resources. My name is Virginia Olsen, I am a 5th-generation lobsterman from Stonington. I now work with District 4 of the IAM Union with the Maine Lobstering Union.

We support LD 1808 An Act to Enact the Maine Climate Superfund Act. The storms of 2023 devastated so much of Maine's coastline. Maine was fortunate that our regulators, both state and federal, jumped into action to restore as much of our working waterfront as possible. The task at hand was to restore waterfront access points where the largest majority of fishermen were serviced in each town, which worked and got us back fishing. As you go east, more and more docks are owned by fishing families. The private family docks do not service the number of fishermen a commercial dock does so many are still in disrepair. I want to tell you about one of these. Andrew Gove was my grandfather's best friend. Both fishermen lived through the depression, found lovely island wives, and had families. Andrew's home was right on the water in downtown Stonington. Andrew's wife Rose watched him leave

and return on his boat to the dock and float in front of their home everyday.

The view of the harbor, and everything Andrew loved to do, fish, race lobsterboats, and prepare for the next season.

Andrew passed some years ago and never got to see the state of his dock and workshop after 2023 storm. When I passed their home, all I could think was Rose is looking out at the damage the storm had done, with no means to repair, watching what they worked their whole life for slowly fall apart and sink into the sea, it must have been just gut-wrenching. Rose passed last week, she never saw their life's work restored. What is even sadder is that I am 100% sure we have a family dealing with the same issues in so many of our coastal towns. Our members own their own Co-op Lobster 207. At our coop, we have a pound used to store lobsters- it was damaged, but the pound does not directly service lobstermen, so we did not qualify for funding, but I can tell you these things impact the industry just the same. Maine needs a real plan for the future, so we are not in the same situation next time.

I hope you will vote LD 1808 ought to pass.

Thank you for your time,

Virginia Olsen

