

Krista Rosen
Kittery
LD 299

In support of LD 299 - Testimony submitted by Cold Current Kelp LLC, Kittery, Maine

-Cold Current Kelp is a small Maine aquaculture and skincare business. We farm sugar kelp off the coast of Kittery and use it to produce KelpGlow® Facial Oil, sold to consumers and retailers across the U.S.

-We strongly support LD 299 because aquaculture is farming - we just do it in the water. It has long made sense to include ocean farmers in the same investment frameworks that support our colleagues in agriculture and forestry, and we're glad to see this bill take that step.

-Access to low-cost investment capital is a genuine constraint for small aquaculture businesses like ours. We compete against producers in other states and countries that already have access to this kind of support. LD 299 levels the playing field without imposing any new taxes on Maine citizens.

-Maine's working waterfronts are part of what makes this state distinctive - economically, culturally, and as a tourism destination. Small ocean farms like Cold Current Kelp are part of that identity. LD 299 helps ensure that businesses like ours can remain viable long-term rather than being displaced by residential development.

-We urge the committee to vote Ought To Pass on LD 299. Thanks for listening.