

Good Afternoon,
Senator Brenner
Representative Gramlich
And members of the joint standing committee on the Environment and Natural Resources

My Name is Camden Reiss and I am a clammer from Brunswick. I am testifying today in support of LD 508 and its amendment.

I am here today knowing that this bill calls for a study commission relative to finfish aquaculture and that is a really good start. Protecting our waters is always a good beginning.

As a clammer, who is putting himself through the university by digging calms, the importance of the natural resource can't be stated strongly enough.

I read a lot and it hasn't escaped me that finfish aquaculture is being banned around the world.

It also hasn't escaped me that we are doing everything we can in Maine to attract industrial scale aquaculture without having some of the science questions answered before we do that.

Questions like:

Why has the state not reinstated the dive program underneath the net pens, so we know that the public trust is being protected?

Is the state at cross purposes with economic development and the environment?

Are the regulations strong enough to stop a major polluter, who will take most of the money out of state if not out of country with it leaving Maine people with polluted waters?

I don't have the answers to these questions, but I think putting together a group of stakeholders that goes beyond the industrial aquaculture lobby is a good start. I urge you to do what this language suggests and take a close look.