

**Owen H. Williams
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Testimony in favor of LD 1042

Morning folks,

I am a lifelong boater. I grew up on the New Meadows River and in Casco Bay. During my working career we lived in Southern New Hampshire for 35 years. We would put our boat in the salt water at Rye NH and enjoy the Piscataqua River from Great Bay to the Isle of Shoals. 8 years ago I retired and we moved back to Maine. So we are back to enjoying Casco Bay. A few years ago I joined the Wawenock Power and Sail group of the US Power Squadron for Mid Coast Maine. I have taken three boating courses and helped with boating classes.

From my observations most boaters do their best to keep their passengers safe as they enjoy all the aspects of the beautiful Maine coast. It makes no sense to have the State of Maine operating under a different set of rules than the US Coast Guard. To have our youth wearing life jackets at least until they reach the age of 13 also makes sense. I've never met a twelve year old who does not enjoy the adventure of riding at the front of a boat as it crosses to the harbor on the other side of the river. Even if the water is choppy due to a normal afternoon southerly breeze that we enjoy most afternoons in Southern Maine.

Maine needs to adopt LD 1042 as part of keeping our youth safe by requiring them to wear life jackets at least until reaching the age of 13. Our new law requiring boat operators to be educated needs to be rounded out by having Maine conform to youth under 13 wearing a life jacket.

Please adopt the proposed LD 1042

Owen Williams

I'd be glad to answer any questions.