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**THE MAINE SENATE**  
132nd Legislature

*Testimony of Senator Nicole Grohoski introducing*  
**LD 1341, Resolve, Directing the Department of Marine Resources to  
Evaluate How to Effectively Allow 2 Licensed Individuals to Fish for  
Lobsters or Scallops from a Single Vessel**

*Before the Committee on Marine Resources*

April 10, 2025

Senator Tepler, Representative Hepler, and members of the Marine Resources Committee. I am Senator Nicole Grohoski, and I represent District 7, the majority of Hancock County. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of LD 1341, “Resolve, Directing the Department of Marine Resources to Evaluate How to Effectively Allow 2 Licensed Individuals to Fish for Lobsters or Scallops from a Single Vessel.”

This bill directs the Department of Marine Resources to evaluate how two licensed harvesters—each holding a valid lobster or scallop license—may operate from a single vessel without increasing the total harvest. It also requires that the department consult with the appropriate advisory councils and report its findings to both the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and this committee, with the option of proposing legislation in the next session. The intent here is clear: to support the future viability and safety of Maine’s working waterfront without compromising the long-term viability of the fishery.

We are hearing more and more from harvesters who are struggling with the current constraints. In the lobster fishery, the owner-operator model with its 800-trap limit per license has long served the state well. However, the industry is facing real challenges: a shortage of capable sternmen, increased fuel and gear costs, and stagnant dock prices. As a result, many captains are fishing alone under increasingly risky conditions—jeopardizing not just their business but their safety.

Allowing – but not requiring – two licensed captains to fish their individual gear from a single vessel would provide immediate relief without increasing overall harvest. It would also lower operating costs and promote shared labor in an industry that is vital to our coastal economy and culture.

A similar challenge exists in the scallop fishery. Under current rules, entry is limited by a lottery system, but vessel sharing is not. Recreational harvesters can team up on a single boat, yet two licensed draggers cannot fish their quotas together. Allowing this flexibility could lead to more efficient and safer operations, particularly in a fishery with limited days and high pressure. This resolve doesn't make any regulatory changes—it simply asks the Department to study this concept, gather input from stakeholders, and recommend a path forward (if one exists) that safeguards both our marine resources and the people who rely on them.

I have spoken with the Department about this resolve and understand a few amendments will be needed before proceeding, especially regarding the timing of the report back to your committee. I also know that the scallop industry is not regulated by the ASMFC, so that reference will need to be removed, and consultation with the Maine Scallop Advisory Council should be added. I will be glad to return to the work session with an amendment that fixes issues for your consideration.

I respectfully urge the committee to support this resolve, and I welcome any questions.