

**TESTIMONY OF
Deirdre Gilbert
Department of Marine Resources**

**The Department of Marine Resources (DMR) is testifying
In Support of
LD 1319 An Act to Amend the Law Regarding the Suspension of Licenses Issued by the Department of
Marine Resources for Failure to Comply with Reporting Requirements
Before the Committee on Marine Resources
Sponsored by Senator Reny
Date of Hearing: April 17, 2025**

Senator Tepler, Representative Hepler, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources, my name is Deirdre Gilbert, Director of State Marine Policy for DMR and I am testifying on behalf of the Department in support of LD 1319. This is a Department bill, and we are grateful to Senator Reny for sponsoring this bill on our behalf.

Under existing law, a marine resources license holder may be suspended for failure to comply with either weekly or monthly reporting requirements. This suspension authority was created in 2013. At that time, there were no fisheries that had daily harvester reporting requirements, so a process to suspend for failure to meet daily harvester reporting requirements was not created.

Since that time, and with the advent of electronic reporting technology, daily harvester reporting requirements have been established for both the herring and menhaden fisheries. This was necessary because both of these fisheries are subject to quotas that must be monitored in real time. The fishery is closed when the quota is reached.

Daily electronic harvester reporting has been required in the menhaden fishery for over 5 years. While compliance has improved over time, having complete reports remains a challenge in a fishery of nearly 400 license holders. However, because there is no suspension process for daily reporting the only way for the Department to compel the submission of missing reports is when the license holder attempts to renew their license the following spring, at which point the renewal can be withheld until the reports are provided. In 2023, at the time of license renewal DMR received reports of nearly 1 million pounds of menhaden landings that were not submitted during the season. This caused Maine to exceed its quota, which then had to be paid back in the 2024 season.

With this proposed change in law, DMR could suspend a license during the fishing season for failure to submit daily reports. We do not anticipate implementing these suspensions following a single missing report, but at key times in the fishery, such as once the state allocated quota has been reached, and prior to entering the Episodic Event Set Aside. LD 1319 spells out a process consistent with that of the processes for weekly and monthly reporting shortcomings. Like the existing landings suspensions, the suspension for failing to provide daily reports is lifted immediately upon the provision of the missing reports. We anticipate that this will improve our ability to obtain reports in season and avoid overages.

Following review of this bill by DMR's Assistant Attorney General, it was recommended that the language regarding the daily reports be amended to specify that it is those reports that were "established by rule pursuant to section 6173", for consistency with the other sections.

Thank you for your consideration and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.