

Chairs Baldacci and Roberts, members of the IF&W committee:

Many of you know me as Kent Ackley, the Representative from Monmouth in the 128th and 129th Legislatures. I am also Executive Director of 1 Big Sustainable Island (1BSI), a small, community based private non-profit that operates a 14 acre island park in the center of Annabessacook Lake.

Like many parks, from dawn to dusk anyone can visit, walk the trails, go swimming, use our facilities for free at 1BSI. It's our overnight guests that help cover the costs of providing it.

Here's our website. Just point your phone camera at this QRCode and click on the link:



We use technology and innovative design to make our overnight sites novel, eye-catching, perhaps a bit quirky, and adventurous. It's experiential hospitality. Our guests support public access, community engagement, and our outreach and education programs. Our most recent 2023 addition is The Nautilus Waterhouse (which is why I am here today).

Here's what the Nautilus looks like:



The Nautilus is a proof of concept of how to implement a Maine homemade houseboat the right way. For the last two years, this registered homemade houseboat has done the following:

- Blending with the environment, it doesn't disrupt the neighborhood. It is docked at the island a half-mile from shore for 6 or 7 months of the year.
- Protecting the environment with a low-cost sanitation plan that includes approved and permitted bathroom and shower facilities that are a 200 foot walk away.

- Is a navigable craft proven to IFW's satisfaction (when we put the outboard on it).
- Exceeding IFW's boating safety requirements – navigation lights, handrails, after dark lighting, spotlight, lifejackets, horn, throw bag, & fire extinguisher.
- Locally owned.
- Contributing to the tax base; last year, this boat generated thousands in lodging taxes.
- A short-term rental that doesn't displace any year-round residents helping the housing shortage problem.

This proof of concept shows that all the problems this bill is designed to solve have solutions that don't necessitate a blanket prohibition on homemade houseboats.

In its current form, this bill requires or implies all sorts of expensive remodels that have less costly alternatives. The bill requires:

- Federal standards for inland watercraft,
- marine grade windows,
- grid electricity, water, and waste disposal at the dock,
- quick connect devices to connect
- a private indoor bathroom,
- US Coast Guard Approval.

It raises the minimum boat standards to the point where they will be out of reach of DIYers, recyclers, and everyday industrious Mainers. There are less expensive solutions that get same the job done. The Nautilus proves this.

It is important to acknowledge the Department's point, however. We are talking about setting a course for what Maine's waters and waterfront will look like a few decades from now.

I'm sure we don't want to look like the wild west. However, this bill would exclude many Mainers and after 20 years, only Mainers who can afford commercially manufactured boats will be included. Do we want a Maine that looks like every other suburban and urban place?

Historically, the authenticity of Maine is based on our willingness to choose our own way. I hope this committee goes down the path of helping everyday people build Maine a Dirigo future. Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater.

I thank the committee for their time and am happy to take questions.

Kent Ackley Executive Director 1 Big Sustainable Island Annabessacook Lake