



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Testimony of Representative Holly Eaton introducing
**LD 1679 – An Act to Allocate Scallop Dragging Licenses for Island
Communities**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources

Senator Tepler, Representative Hepler and fellow members of the Marine Resources Committee, for the record, I'm Representative Holly Eaton, representing House District 15, which includes the island and coastal communities of Deer Isle, Stonington, Brooklin, Tremont, Southwest Harbor, Frenchboro, Swan's Island, Isle au Haut and Vinalhaven.

LD 1679 builds on the same intent as **LD 1678**—supporting island residents by creating a designated opportunity to participate in the fisheries that define their lives. This bill would allow for the allocation of one scallop dragging license per year to each of the 14 unbridged island communities, issued directly to a resident.

Like its companion bill, **LD 1679** does not interfere with existing license holders. If there's already someone on the island with a scallop dragging license, that license remains untouched. This is about opening up one additional opportunity—supporting a sustainable livelihood for someone who may otherwise not have access.

As we all know, islanders piece together their incomes in deeply resourceful ways. A scallop dragging license might be one more way to do just that. It's about keeping people in the places they love, in a state where the cost of living—especially on unbridged islands—is only rising.

Maine's scallop fishery is tightly managed, as we all know, through limited entry and conservation-driven regulation by DMR. **LD 1679** respects those parameters—it adds no new pressure, just one thoughtful, island-based opportunity to allow residents to stay connected to a fishery that's been central to their way of life.

And like **LD 1678**, this bill includes a fail-safe: if the license goes unused for three consecutive years, it goes back into circulation and can be reallocated to another island community.

I respectfully urge your support for **LD 1679** and appreciate your time and thoughtful consideration.

District 15: Brooklin, Deer Isle, Eagle Island Township, Frenchboro, Southwest Harbor,
Stonington, Swan's Island, Tremont, Isle au Haut, Vinalhaven