

Dear Senator Tepler, Representative Hepler, and other honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources.

My name is Robert Brewer, I am a resident of Deer Isle, and I am here to speak in favor of LD 1279 to support the growth of Maines Farmed Atlantic Sea Scallop Industry

My father and I have run with the help of many people what has become known as "The Scallop Project". We have worked closely with Dana Morse from Sea Grant, and Hugh Cowperthwaite from Coastal Enterprises Inc., and countless others to create a sustainable scallop fishery. While we grow the spat, we catch the wild spat over the mud where the spats survivability is practically non existent. Some of the scallops we grow will spawn once or twice in our lantern nets collective releasing spawn by the billions for the wild fishery before we harvest them.

Currently we have to take our samples for testing to the Bigelow Lab in Boothbay for testing at our cost. This cost was funded by a grant that Dana wrote early on to develop some data to show the feasibility of growing and selling live scallops. The funds ran out a few years ago and Bigelow has been highly subsidizing the testing with funds from the projects. This has created seven years worth of data that show that there is opportunity here for fishermen in Maine. The problem is that the tests done by a private lab are 500 dollars per test and at times you need two tests on one sample.

What we are after with this legislation is an opportunity for the DMR and people working to grow this fishery along side the other currently cultured species, mussels and oysters. The test is the same for all the cultured species and they can be done on the same "tray". The cost of a private lab test that is hanging over our head prohibits us from investing any more funds in this project than we already have . This bill also addresses transportation which has been a barrier for other farmers.

In closing those involved in growing scallops are not interested in special treatment, Just an opportunity for the DMR and the people working working on the water to grow this fishery

Sincerely,
Bob Brewer