



# Town of Harpswell, Maine

INCORPORATED 1758

MARINE RESOURCES & HARBOR MANAGEMENT

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Paul Plummer  
Harbormaster &  
MR Administrator

March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021

Senator Deschambault, Representative Warren and esteemed members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee, My name is Paul Plummer, Harbormaster for the Town of Harpswell and I am writing to you in favor of LD 514; *An Act to Establish and Promote a System of Safe Disposal of Expired Marine Flares.*

Marine Flares have been a long standing issue among Harbormaster's for many years. Boaters, both recreational and commercial, are required to carry these flares on board their vessel, however in many instances the operators of the vessels have to dig through years of expired flares to display their current up-to-date flares that keep them in compliance. The current lack of options to dispose of marine flares is creating a dangerous situation for boaters, marinas, solid waste facilities and first responders by not providing a safe method to dispose of them.

At a time when adding another tax may be controversial, it would seem likely that the user (owner of a vessel) would be willing to pay a minimal tax of \$.25 per package of marine flares if the end result meant that they could safely dispose of them. This is only an opinion, however the consideration of cost for what's reasonable and unreasonable weighs heavily on the average residents decision making process.

As stewards of our oceans, we have an obligation to ensure that toxic items stay out of our waters. By providing a safe alternative to the disposal of marine flares, this would help keep both charged and discharged flares out and away from our marine resources that so many of our Maine residents rely on. We make every attempt to key pollutants such as fuel, oil, human waste and pesticides out of our waters. Adding one more solution can only help in a time when the Gulf of Maine is already struggling.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul Plummer  
Harbormaster & Marine Resource Administrator  
Town of Harpswell