

Betsy Garrold
Knox
LD 1286

My name is Betsy Garrold, I am president of Food for Maine's Future. I live in Knox and am represented in the Senate by Senator Curry.

Having listened to the hearing on LD1286 I am even more concerned about the structure of the proposed task force than I was when I originally read (very recently) the proposed resolution. Here are my concerns:

*Maine has long been a resource colony for out of state investors. With the heavy emphasis on venture capitalists and entrepreneurs on the task force this exploitation will only continue.

*When a question was asked about having participants on the task force that had an ecological and sustainable focus the answer was not reassuring. Adding on more members with these expertises as an afterthought does nothing to quell my concerns about the true goals of such a task force.

*The fact that no tribal representation is present as the list stands right now is egregious.

*It was mentioned that we can use Europe as a model for future "blue" ventures. Only if we take the lessons of their mistakes to heart. This does not appear to be the current course of aquaculture development in the state as typified by the Nordic Aquaculture's proposal in Belfast. It is my understanding that Norway would not give them a permit for their planned salmon CAFO so they came to a poor rural county in Maine to try to foist their questionable technology on us.

*The fact that there is a group that has been studying this problem for years and is about to release its report and the fact that this resolution is being heard as an "emergency" both point to the fact that this is duplicative effort and needs to be slowed until the SeaMaine Coalition can release their report.

*The testimony by one of the venture capitalists that they are only interested in "high risk" business models is deeply disturbing. Do we want these moneyed interests to use our Maine waters for their risky experiments? Surely not.

I am testifying neither for nor against because I share the speaker from the Bigelow Laboratory's concern that there is too much silo-ing of information in Maine and that collaboration and communication are both good things. If the purpose of this task force is to build that network of those working in this sector of our economy then I am all for it. If the goal of this task force is hit and run exploitation of our natural resources then I am against it.

Please amend this resolution to add more protection for the sustainability of our waters here in Maine and vote it out of committee "ought to pass". Or barring this kind of shift in focus I ask the committee to vote "ought not to pass."

Thank you for your time.