

George Casey
Freeport

67 Birch Point Road
Freeport, ME 04032

April 11, 2021

Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
Legislature of the State of Maine
Augusta, ME

Re:No Support for LD 114

Dear Elected Legislators for the State of Maine:

We are writing this letter to indicate our lack of support of LD 114 regarding the noise level of airboats.

We live on the northern end of Harraseeket Harbor in Freeport. Our property directly abuts the active clam harvesting flats in this area.

We do support the working waterfront and those who derive their living from the sea and adjacent tidal areas. For years we have permitted clammers to cross our property to access the clam flats for the purpose of harvesting. They have been respectful of our property and our privacy. On summer mornings when the windows are open and the tide is right, their conversations are a quiet background that mingles with the early morning calls of the birds. It is part of the fabric of living near the water and we appreciate that texture.

Similarly, the distant mutter of the lobster boats starting up further down the harbor or the quiet of the motors on the skiffs taking the clammers to the flats has not been an issue. Nor has the sound of recreational watercraft in the harbor been an issue.

What we do not appreciate is the recent (in the past few years) and unconscionable noise, day and night, of the airboats that have begun to intrude. The sound equivalent to that of a jet engine at your ear at 5 am is mentally disturbing and frankly unhealthy. When our grandkids are here to visit, they wake early and screaming at the sound. "Make it stop!" is the cry, and we cannot.

During the day, the noise is equally intolerable, although not as bad as in the early morning.

What would be a ticketable noise offense against a car or motorcycle if we lived on a road in town is somehow not an offense if such a noise or louder comes from the harbor? It is still the same disrespect and intrusion. What logic is there?

George, in one of his Viet Nam tours, lived near the end of the Bien Hoa runway where F4 Phantoms took off. The airboats are similar in noise level.

The noise from the airboats in an ideal world would be governed by the same noise ordinances and restrictions as on land. If this is not possible and looking at the two proposed offerings before your committee, LD 89 is the better alternative with lower (65 dba) night-time and daytime levels (80 dba). The levels proposed in LD 114 (75 dba night-time and 90 dba daytime) offer no real relief from the current situation which is truly inhumane.

So, for benefit of all who value their hearing, their sanity, and at least some degree of peace around the waterfront, we do not support LD 114.

Sincerely,

George E Casey, Jr and Linda L Bail
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