



April 12, 2021

Owner, Long Cove Sea Farm
Stonington, Maine

TESTIMONY AGAINST LD 1146 - *An Act To Protect Maine's Ocean Waters and Support Regulatory Oversight and the Long-term Health of the Aquaculture Industry*
BEFORE THE MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE OF THE MAINE LEGISLATURE

Abigail Barrows, MPhil

As a small-scale oyster farmer I believe that enormous leases, especially for fin fish, held by individuals or corporations are not what Maine needs to have a healthy aquaculture industry. That said, I do not think that this bill is the way forward to protect Maine's waters. If a bill is going to be put forward to restrict lease quantity and sizes, it needs to target that directly. Additionally, more stakeholders need to be at the table, the language needs to be much clearer and Act should not try to roll in numerous other points that lumps all farmers together in a way that could push out small farmers because of fee hikes.

I am against the revocation of exemption to NURPA and Site development law because it will allow opponents to require visual impact and alternative site studies. Visually, coastal Mainers have adjusted to the waterscape being populated with colorful buoys and lobster boats, it is very much what defines the coast. I believe that we are in that adjustment period for aquaculture and hopefully soon, shellfish farmer and farmers working on the water will become another familiar part of the landscape.

I have applied for multiple LPA's and an experimental lease and feel that the applications are quite extensive and thorough for smaller leases. Additional annual fees and ill-fitting regulation would be detrimental to the many small and medium sized farmers that keep seafood local and help our working waterfronts thrive.

Sincerely,

Abigail Barrows