

Mark Bennett
Sorrento

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Chairman Miramant, Representative McCreight, and distinguished members of the Marine Resources Committee.

I am submitting this testimony in support of LD 1146

Before I speak further on this bill, I want to be clear, I support small aquaculturists and the owner-operator model. What I don't support is large industrialized and primarily in water salmon farming. It's a polluting business, it takes up too much of the water and lastly, the state has indicated there is no plan for aquaculture growth in the state of Maine except for the free for all that currently exists. The current proposal for a lease in Gouldsboro at the foot of Cadillac Mountain is a heavily lobstered area, it also is home to one of the state's most significant reasons that tourists come here – Acadia National Park.

Right now, the rules and regulations will continue to attract out-of-state foreign companies to develop our Maine waters. In 2006, the lease size went from an aggregated lease size of 250 acres to 1,000. Not one person was there representing the lobster industry, the fishing industry, or those who recreate on the water. Rinse and Repeat in 2017, when the terms of the lease went from 10-20 years – no industry representation. We have a serious problem in Maine and that's the lack of planning along Maine's coast.

I urge you to pass LD 1146 for the future of our oceans.