

Barry Catlin
Harpswell

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Harpswell Lobsterman

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

My name is Barry Catlin and I fully support LD 1146. I have spoken before about the need to reduce 1,000 acres, the terms of the lease from 20 years. This bill is important for more reasons than just that. I fish quahog bay and have been watching the growth of aquaculture leases in my area. Two more have been submitted for limited purpose aquaculture – meaning they are 400 square feet each. When I saw the LPA application I knew that I wouldn't have a voice. Under these rules, it's up to the harbormaster. There is no hearing, not way for me to really be involved with outcome.

I have traps in the area right now that they are proposing for these aquaculture leases. I have seen time and time again how those making the decisions cherry pick when they choose to visit a site and say no lobstermen are there – they grant the lease and then we can't lobster there anymore. The system is rigged and I am sick of it. There is very little oversight of these leases and more than once I have seen them abandoned.

LD 1146 calls for a statewide conversation to deal with the numerous issues created by the wild west of aquaculture. The conflicts are growing. I urge this committee to have this conversation at the very least and to pass LD 1146.

Thank you.