

Joshua Conover
Marshall cove mussels, Islesboro Marine Enterprises, F/V ODD BALL

I have been a lobsterman for 30 years on Islesboro and currently serve on the Lobster Zone D board and am also a Mussel Farmer and am opposed to LD1146.

I feel that the current aquaculture lease management system although not perfect is far from broken. Giving landowners the ability to stop an aquaculture lease because they feel it is not visually appealing and stopping the transfer of leases could be a death blow to what will be one of the best industries in the state of Maine. Will the next bill allow landowners to select what lobster boats and buoys can fish the bay based on what they find to be visually appealing.

It is important that Maine allows aquaculture leases and businesses to be transferable so as to keep it viable for investment. These farms no matter large or small create good jobs in coastal and rural island communities like my own. By devaluing our existing businesses and by restricting access to the resource you would be killing jobs in an already tough economy.

Thank you for your time and please realize that there are already mechanisms in place for landowners and the public to address their concerns with leases and LD 1146 is not a good idea.