

Karl Eschholz
Brunswick

I am voicing my opposition to LD 1146. I have been working in the field of aquaculture for the past 28 years. It's a horribly difficult industry to get into. You must invest a great deal of money and labor for 3 years before getting any return. Most work both their lease sites and their normal job until they can make a change. I have worked at farms that came close to failure or failed not due to their operation but due to the negligence of others. We the aquaculture industry of Maine work hard to protect the waters of Maine. We are at the most risk. We were the first to note ocean acidification when shellfish spawn were not going right. We have seen the ice freeze up the rivers to not freezing at all. We are there day in and day out tending our crops.

I have worked with the scientist at the department of Marine Resources. They are knowledgeable and helpful when applicants are working through the long applications to develop their business's. What we must go through is an arduous task to find a site, research what goes on there, and execute the paperwork. What outside groups don't see. This is the working water front. It used to be fishing now mostly gone. Just the lobster industry remains. Global warming will take care of that. We need to be more sensible help this industry (something mostly taken care of by 1-3 people in a company). Adding increased pressure on struggling business does not help.

I oppose this bill as it puts my life's work at risk. Increased pressure on obtaining lease sites slows the growth.

The current system is working. The DMR does a great job analyzing the data and discussing areas you want to lease.

I oppose the revocation of the exemption to NURPA. It will allow a who's eye is looking at this statement. Beautiful photos have been published with oysters and gear.

Our industry is amazing there are 3 commercial hatcheries and 1 non-profit in the state all supplying hundreds of growers. It's unique our product with the made in Maine stamp gets distributed all over the world. We have an amazing coastline that shouldn't be dedicated to huge homes and lawn mowers. We need jobs that support the environment.

I support the Maine Aquaculture Association in opposition to LD 1146

Karl Eschholz