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Dear Committee on Marine Resources,

It is long past time for Maine to update its rules and regulations, in order to reduce conflict between lobstermen, aquaculturists and other stakeholders. I'm not anti-aquaculture. Aquaculture can be good for the economy, the state and consumers. I am, however, very concerned about the scale of the aquaculture projects coming into Maine and how they are creating conflict on the working waterfront.

There is no question conflict is growing between aquaculturists and those in traditional fisheries. This is partially because 95 percent of leases are being approved, and this growth in the aquaculture industry is coming at a time when the Department of Marine Resources has fewer staff for oversight and monitoring. It's not a good balance for the people of Maine or our coastline.

Please show some leadership and wisdom here, as you are the current stewards of this vital resource that long precedes your tenure, and one that will hopefully be here long after you're gone.