

Testimony in Support of LD 1146: An Act To Protect Maine's Ocean Waters and Support Regulatory Oversight and the Long-term Health of the Aquaculture Industry

Senator Miramant, Representative McCreight, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources, my name is Kathleen Rybarz. I appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Friends of Frenchman Bay in support of LD 1146.

Friends of Frenchman Bay is a non-profit corporation, all volunteer organization with supporters from Hancock County Maine and the nine towns surrounding Frenchman Bay. Our supporters include people of all ages and professions, young people making a living from the sea, retired folks, business owners, health professionals, teachers, scientists, technicians, landowners and renters from all political persuasions. The thing that unites us is the need to protect and preserve the clean cold water in Frenchman Bay and surrounds.

We are here to support all the aspects of this legislation. However, I have special comments around three pieces that we would like to focus on:

1. We support the language which proposes **limits on the acres one company/lease holder can control**. We love the variety of people that lease aquaculture sites in Frenchman Bay. We feel that encouraging the development of new small/mid-size ventures is critical to providing opportunities for anyone interested in an ocean business. With the wording, there is still room to grow a business to a substantial size.
2. We believe each and every lease applicant and holder should be required to pass the same requirements, **and not just be able to purchase (at an undisclosed price) a previously approved lease**. A subsequent leasee could do real damage to the environment through misunderstanding of process or neglect of equipment. For each applicant, going through the leasing process teaches lessons and establishes a relationship between the department and lease holder.
3. The last item to bring to your attention, is the **current exclusion for aquaculture from Title 38, chapter 3, including the Natural Resources Protection Act and the site location development laws**. Siting has been the key issue resulting in conflicts involving development for Aquaculture. With 3487 miles of coastline here in Maine, there have to be alternatives for placement with every applicant and application.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Best Regards,

Kathleen Rybarz

Friends of Frenchman Bay

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