

LD 1146

Phoebe Walsh

LD 1146 will cripple Maine's climate and economic resilience, unnecessarily damaging an industry that produces desperately needed jobs and low-cost, sustainable protein. The Covid-19 Pandemic demonstrated the adaptability of the Maine aquaculture sector during times of tremendous change. The diversity of farm and businesses sizes helped the industry weather covid-related challenges. LD1146 will weaken our resiliency for future unprecedented years brought forth by climate change and economic shifts.

LD1146 is a misguided, vague bill that favors the aesthetics of Maine's coast over those that work on it. As an environmentalist, I support coastal protections, but I also understand the tremendous environmental benefits of aquaculture. Revoking the long-held NRPA exemption is bad for our working coast because it will allow opponents - who wish to ignore industry - to require visual impact and alternative site studies. Mainers wants a strong working waterfront, not one that caters to the wealthy and the NIMBYs.

As a Mainer, an oyster farmer, and an environmentalist, I **do not** support this bill. I support the Maine Aquaculture Association and their efforts to find constructive solutions that marry industry growth and riparian concerns.