

May 4, 2021

The Honorable David Miramant, Senate Chair
The Honorable Jay McCreight, House Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources
Cross Building, Room 206
Augusta, ME. 04333

Senator Miramant, Representative McCreight, Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you this morning. My name is Shey Conover. My family and I live on Islesboro, and I am the co-owner of Islesboro Marine Enterprises a full-service boatyard and sea farm growing Marshall Cove Mussels in the waters of Penobscot Bay.

I am here today to testify in strong opposition to LD 1211, “A Resolve, To Create the Study Group to Research Balancing Development and Conservation in Maine's Coastal Waters and Submerged Lands.”

LD 1211 establishes a 25-member commission to review existing shoreland zone, coastal waters and submerged lands laws in Maine, however there is no representation for aquaculture on the Commission.

LD 1211 creates yet another commission to study how Maine’s Marine resources are managed. With respect to only the aquaculture sector, Maine has conducted 23 studies over the last 35 years, 13 of which have focused on policy issues around aquaculture development and the leasing system. Many prior studies came from opponents to a particular lease application wanting to either delay the application or change the leasing criteria to ensure the application was denied. LD 1211 appears to be yet another example of this. The existing leasing system and environmental monitoring system works.

This bill is very similar to prior work under the Baldacci administration. The task force created at that time considered the issues outlined in LD 1211 and concluded that the establishment of “Bay Management” authorities was not warranted and would in fact make it more difficult to effectively manage the states marine resources.

For these reasons, please vote Ought NOT to Pass on LD 1211. Thank you for listening and for all you do to preserve Maine’s working waterfronts. I would be glad to answer any questions you have.

Sincerely,

Shey Conover