

Daniel Deveraux
Mere Point Oyster Company

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In Opposition TO

LD 1211 Resolve, To Create the Study Group to Research Balancing Development and Conservation in Maine's Coastal Waters and Submerged Lands

Senator Miramant, Representative McCreight, honorable members of the 130th Maine Legislature's Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources. My name is Daniel Deveraux, I'm the co-owner of Mere Point Oyster Company and I'm also the Coastal Resource Manager for the Town of Brunswick. I'm speaking today on behalf of my ownership in Mere Point Oyster Company.

I stand in opposition to LD1211. LD1211 is another assault on the working waterfront, and more so the working WATERS of Maine. LD1211 is no different and has the same intention as LD1146. Its true intent is to dismantle the current and ongoing development of aquaculture, making this bill once again, just like 1146, DECEPTIVE.

Over the last 40 years Maine has implemented rigorous aquaculture standards, regulations and laws. Conducted numerous aquaculture development studies and completed numerous research projects. This compilation of the state's knowledge and experience with aquaculture has created a ridged foundation of rules, regulations and laws that other coastal states emulate. Why on earth would we want to financially boot strap an agency like the already underfunded Department of Marine Resources, who is working hard to balance public trust rights currently, with an additional study to investigate whether or not California and Rhode Island are managing their coastal zones appropriately and whether or not Maine should adopt their strategies for coastal zone management. (LD 1211 Sec. 5 Duties) THIS IS MAINE, the most northeast state in the nation. Our complex coastline is like no other and is being managed delicately like no other.

Aquaculture, particularly shellfish and seaweed are incredibly important to health of our near shore ecosystems and our own coastal community resilience to climate change and sea level rise. Saltmarshes are retreating, shorelines are eroding, invasive species like the green and blue crabs are commonly wreaking havoc on our native shellfisheries and oceans are more acidic than they were just 10 years ago. Upland coastal development is exploding, leading to increased pollution influence and increased algal blooms putting our native near shore shellfisheries in peril of extinction in the near future.

Shellfish and Seaweed aquaculture allow an opportunity to mitigate the massive loss of those precious ecosystem services offered by our native shellfish and seaweed, all the while giving local folks an opportunity to start or continue to work on the water. Why would anyone who cares about the conservation, the history, heritage, and most importantly the health of our coastal waters want to stop this type of development, well they wouldn't. That's exactly why this bill is suspect.

Reading LD1211 over and over and trying to make sense of such a misaligned, misguided, and uninformed language leads me to question it's not so much the conservation of coastal waters the authors care about but rather the view across the water from the bay window of their McMansion.

I am not opposed to fair and equitable changes, many of which the State of Maine has adopted and continues to adopt as the aquaculture industry develops. What I'm opposed to is legislative and legal assaults set out to achieve the goals a few very wealthy landowners who hide behind words like conservation, sustainability, protect, fairness; when in reality they could care less about any of those qualities.

With this testimony I encourage members of the Marine Resources Committee to vote

ought not to pass and continue the fight for working waterfronts and our working waters so that the Maine coast will remain vibrant, healthy and an exciting place for people to visitors but more importantly for locals to live and work.

Respectfully Submitted,