

Joanna Fogg
Bar Harbor Oyster Company

Greetings Senators and Honorable members of the Marine Resource Committee,
Thank you for allowing me to speak today. My name is Joanna Fogg and my husband and I own Bar Harbor Oyster Company.

I'm here to oppose LD1211. It was only a couple weeks ago that I was also here to oppose LD1146 and we greatly appreciate your vote on that. I'm very concerned that 1211 is just another stab at the same issue in different language.

Establishing a 25-member commission to review the shoreland and coastal waters without any representation from sea farmers feels like such a silencing. I don't think you will see the same numbers of people turn out to testify in opposition to this bill but it's not because we don't care deeply. It's not because we don't feel threatened. It's because it's exhausting to always show up and play defense. It's disheartening to have another layer of scrutiny on our vocation. It's because we have small, medium and large farms to run. We are busy combatting climate change and setting up food systems that will sustain us as sea temperatures continue to rise. We are putting food on peoples tables.

LD1211 just seems like another way for special interest groups and outside forces to come in and influence the sector. Even if that's not the intention behind the bill that's the impact it will have. It's means more scrutiny, more meetings, more paperwork, more hoops that we have to jump through in order to simply exist and what we need to do is thrive.

Bills like 1211 disregard the urgency of producing healthy, local, sustainable food. I've known for years that we have needed a profound shift in the way we produce food on the planet, and I think sea farming is one of the answers. The pandemic has magnified how critical this is in my mind. The crops we produce in these waters are essential. Our work is essential. Please let Maine be a place of resiliency and innovation and let us do that on the water. Let us grow. Please vote ought not pass on LD1211 because every time I have to show up here I'm not getting my real job done. Thank you.