

TO: Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources

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

DATE: May 4, 2021, Public Hearing

I am Kathryn Gaianguest. I speak today in support of LD 1211. I live in Lamoine, on a cove of Frenchman Bay. I am a retired sociologist, having spent my career divided between teaching and working outside of academia in both private and public sectors. The binding themes in my work have been participatory processes for organization and community development, managing conflicts between diverse public and private interests, and ways in which public and private organizations and communities can foster a balance between development and the environment.

There is more and more evidence that changes are happening in the Gulf of Maine that must be addressed if we are to continue to enjoy the many benefits of this unique part of the world. With Maine's long and varied coastline, some questions are:

--Are we fulfilling our needs and responsibilities for protecting and conserving these coastal waters, while at the same time reaping the food bounties and all other offerings possible in this unique environment?

--How do we respond to the diversity of our multiple bays, and the communities that inhabit them?

--Do our currently available types and scope of public forum(s) meet the needs for citizen participation in decisions impacting their own community?

--Do we need to add local/regional planning to balance multiple--and inherently conflicting--interests and needs arising between public and private groups?

The increasing need to address these questions has become evident in many examples in recent years. Every bay is different in coastal development, land and sea resources, ecological offerings and challenges. Our coastal communities are experiencing varied and growing conflicts and demands for the use and conservation of the coastal waters and submerged lands.

LD 1211 resolve proposes a means for assessing these increasing pressures on our current decision-making processes. It offers recommendations for review and focused research directed toward possible solutions. It outlines a time-limited approach to address current ways that foster conflict, and which pit interest groups in our communities against each other instead of working toward agreed-upon outcomes.

LD 1211 proposes a thoughtful and studied approach to address these issues and I urge you to *vote to pass* this resolve. Thank you.