

Douglas Niven  
Brunswick

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

My name is DOUG NIVEN and I have lived in BRUNSWICK all my life and own Mere Point Oyster Company with my business partner Dan Devereaux. I am on the water today harvesting oysters and therefore unable to testify, so I am writing to you in strong opposition to LD1211.

About 5 years ago, my family started an aquaculture farm in Casco Bay. The farm provides a living for all of us..... my wife and two boys (24 and 20 years old) along with Dan and his two boys (aged 24 and 22). We all work on the farm.

My oldest son (Tyler) graduated from University of Colorado last year and is managing all of our sales. My youngest son (Cameron) will graduate from Montana State University in a year and is excited about coming home to manage all our operations, which he has been doing during the summer vacations.

It is a dream come true to be able to have our kids make a living on the water, earn a livable wage and live in the town they grew up in. Both my boys have Commercial Lobster Licenses, however, they are concerned about the future of that fishery and see Aquaculture as a promising alternative.

All that we have built in the last 5 years would be at risk if LD1211 passed.

LD1211 is yet another attempt to attack the state's working waterfronts. Anti-aquaculture interests are using the legislature to harass hardworking small business owners who are trying to make a living on the water.

The makeup of the commission ensures that commercial working waterfront interests, including commercial fishing and aquaculture, will be in the minority and intentionally marginalized.

The establishment of regional management bodies that structurally discriminate against working waterfront interests will effectively allow wealthy coastal communities to establish "gated communities" where working waterfronts are not welcome.

Maine's working waterfront communities face many challenges, but aquaculture is not one of them.

Please, OPPOSE the LD1211. This is not the answer. My family's future livelihood will be in jeopardy if this is passed.