

May 3, 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 providing me the opportunity to speak with you this morning. My name is Wyllys Chip Terry. I am the CEO and owner of Shellfish Solutions (dba Oyster Tracker) based in Castine Maine. We are a company backed by the Maine Venture Fund and the Maine Technology Institute.

I stand before you 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."

As you will no doubt hear, there are huge problems with this bill. It will have a huge impact on the small businesses that make up the working waterfront of Maine.

We work with over 140 shellfish companies in 12 different states and 4 countries. We see how different states handle the licensing of shellfish aquaculture. Maine compares favourably to most states. The system is not broken and adding another layer of regulation will not make things better. A similar bill in Washington state last year led to huge disruptions in that state.

With the current licensing system, the community interests are well protected. These small businesses that employ an increasing number of people in our rural communities. Other states have not found this balance and are suffering as a result.

The DMR staff in Maine is talented and proactive. They deserve our thanks and support. Sadding them with another layer of bureaucracy is not helpful.

Maine is uniquely positioned to be the center of a flourishing industry. Shellfish provide a healthy protein that is in high demand. It is grown by local farmers who invest back in their communities. And by removing nitrogen and phosphate from the water, shellfish improve the local environment. An interesting case study for Maine are the programs in the Chesapeake where oyster farmers are being paid by polluters to grow more oysters to improve water quality.

Shellfish farming is a win for farmers, dealers, wholesalers, restaurants and consumers. It is a win for the communities where these businesses live and it is a win for our environment. My strong feeling is the state should be encouraging more of these businesses and not trying to strangle them in the cradle.

Finally, I want to thank the committee for your patience and willingness to listen closely to those of us who make our living on the water and help preserve Maine's endangered working waterfronts. Please vote Ought NOT to Pass on LD 1211.

Thank you for your attention. I would be glad to answer any questions you have.



Wyllys Chip Terry
CEO
Shellfish Solutions