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LD 2065

LD 2065 makes some valuable and much needed changes and amendments to Maine's Aquaculture Leasing Laws as follows:

The number of signatures requiring the DMR to hold a hearing on a lease application should be changed from 5 to 25 in order for it to be a serious exercise. This in no way reduces the public's ability to have input into the leasing process or the Department's authority to require a hearing if they deem it necessary to gather information and data relevant to the leasing decision.

LD 2065 also increases from 14 to 30 the number of days comments can be submitted on a proposed lease transfer giving the public MORE time to comment which is also a positive change.

LD 2065 also establishes strict limits on how a Limited Purpose Lease may be converted to a Standard Lease. These are common sense and frankly self explanatory limits that simply reinforce in language what exists in practice. By the same token, the language in 12 MRSA 6072, sub- 12-D is unnecessary and should be eliminated. Because the Limited Purpose Lease has already been in place for some time and has not been subject to violations or complaints it should not be necessary to require DMR personnel to waste valuable time and resources "TO EVALUATE THE POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF THE LEASE CONVERSION ON ANY 'NEW USES' OF THE AREA" By allowing for the consideration of new uses the proposed law gives a blank check to any aquaculture opponents to intentionally create "new uses" to block the conversion of the lease to a standard lease.