

Glenda Beal
Beals
LD 2065

Feb 1, 2023

Dear MDR Committee,

I am against the proposed LD 2065 for the following reasons.

Changing the number from 5 to 25 persons needed to request a hearing is much too drastic of a change, with no reasonable explanation. Isn't it possible that 5 people may actually have valid reason to want a hearing? It looks like the intent is to stifle opposition and fast track all aquaculture applications and lease conversions. Is this really the way government is to be run now? It is important that all voices be heard.

Aquaculture lease applications should not be fast tracked. The state of Maine needs to be sure that historical fisheries are protected by thoroughly evaluating the impacts to the environment of each lease proposed-whether new or renewal. There needs to be an adequate number of staff to oversee all aspects of the lease application process-hearings, regulations, AND evaluating environmental impacts. Maintaining the health of our current fisheries and the environment they depend upon should take priority when considering new/renewal lease applications.

Experimental leases should not be converted to 20 year leases without a hearing.

Relying on the original site review is insufficient because of changes that may have occurred in the lease area either due to the aquaculture activity or other environmental factors. Another assessment of the lease area should always be done to determine the ecological conditions and possible harm from the proposed lease. Once proper testing is done and impact statements are determined, citizens should be given time to review for themselves the published information from any impact study.

Notices of hearings need to be advertised more than once, particularly for those of us in rural areas who depend on a weekly newspaper for local news events.

Thank you for considering my opposition to LD 2065. Sincerely,
Glenda M Beal