

Mimi Sheller
Brooksville
LD 2065

As a resident of Brooksville, ME, with several hundred yard of shoreline on the Bagaduce River, I am extremely concerned about the changes proposed in the Act to Amend Maine's Aquaculture Leasing Laws, and the impact they will have on the protection of rockweed beds which are the basic "nursery" of so many of our aquatic species.

This law will change the way the public is informed about new aquaculture leases and will impact my ability to participate in the decision-making process. A request for a public hearing will be changed from 5 people to 25, which will be very difficult to achieve in a short period of time.

Additionally, the bill will allow an LPA (Limited Practice Aquaculture Lease) to convert to a 20 Year Standard Aquaculture Lease without a hearing unless requested by 25 citizens. This will reduce the opportunity of the public to participate in hearings where they can be informed of the facts and understand the impact.

Also, it requires that comments must be submitted within the 30-day deadline specified in the notice rather than within the 30 days of receipt of the notice. It includes too that the notice be published once in a newspaper in the area of the state effected, or any other method considered appropriate by DMR. This is not sufficient notice, nor sufficient time to gather informed comments from citizens. It will enable companies to rush decisions through without citizen input.

The overall impact of LD 2065 will be to establish new limits on public participation, which are antithetical to the protection of our precious marine resources. Please do not let industry destroy our marine habitat!