

carrie peabody  
Jonesport  
LD 2065  
February 1, 2024

Subject: Opposition to LD 2065

Dear Marine Resources Committee,

My name is Carrie Peabody and I am providing written testimony in opposition to LD 2065 "An Act to Amend Maine's Aquaculture Leasing Laws."

Line 1 of the DMR's proposed legislation begins with  
"Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:"

My understanding is The People of the State enact...not the Department of Marine Resources.

DMR's proposal to limit the number of people requesting a hearing suppresses the views of "The People." Hearings should not be based on a minimum or maximum number of hearing requests. Hearings serve the purpose of ensuring that everyone is heard. Limiting hearings in my opinion breaches due process rights of the citizens and taxpayers of Maine, "The People."

DMR's proposal to reduce the number of hearing notices in local newspapers once again inhibits "The People's" right to awareness of activity that could have an impact upon them or their environment. Limiting hearing notices infringes upon "The People's" right to be informed.

DMR's Commissioner is tasked with an overwhelming amount of responsibility. Aquaculture is a multi-faceted industry that has become more involved than managing a few salmon pens. The DMR might consider focusing on reengineering their permitting/leasing processes to a level that will ensure a quality review. LD 2065 only lowers the bar for aquaculture permit standards while in contrast DMR imposes overly stringent legislation upon other marine industries such as lobster fishing.

Has DMR considered re-engineering their permit approval/review process to partition aquaculture permits based upon industry parameters? For example, size and output of the operation, international company vs. in-state, invasive or non-invasive species. Is the operation growing finfish or local species such as oysters, clams, mussels, seaweed, kelp?

Review of an international large-scale commercial/industrial aquaculture operation producing invasive species is more complex compared to a small local homegrown aquaculture business growing non-invasive species. Improve turnaround by assigning levels of aquaculture permitting/review. So important to ensure permits meet requirements as they relate to the respective industry type.

The DMR's recent quest to strip municipalities of home rule authority and now reduce public hearing notices 2/1, and require 5x the number of hearing requests to hold a hearing is nothing more than over-reaching DMR authority. To foster lack of public knowledge/involvement combined with the elimination of public policy to reduce legislation within the aquaculture arena is not best practice. Such limitations only present new risks for municipalities and tax-paying citizens of Maine.

Thank you for considering my comments in opposition to LD 2065.

Carrie Peabody  
Jonesport Maine