

Ted Robinson
Sedgwick
LD 44

Senator Tepler, Representative Hepler, and members of the Marine Resources Committee, my name is Ted Robinson. I am a Elver fisherman from Sedgwick Maine. Today, I would like to offer testimony against LD LD 44, "An Act to Amend the Laws Pertaining to Elver Fishing."

I understand that the new law restricts fisherman to a limit of 6 hours to hold their eels before selling. I also understand that DMR has promised to remove that language from the bill, as this legislation would be disastrous for seller and buyer. Most fisherman babysit their eels better than their own children. We change the water every few days, check water temperature and pick out a handful of weak or sickly eels that never would have made it to China. This gives the buyer a better product and less dead loss in the buyers tanks. We hold our eels as leverage to get the price we want. If we can't hold eels we loose this leverage. I also heard that the 6 hour limit was a scare tactic to get fisherman to the table to motivate them to a lesser restriction. I would say such a tactic is disrespectful and manipulative. Why not develop minimum standards and training for holding eels and limiting dead loss. Treat us with dignity and respect, peers working together. Personally I never hold eels more than 3 weeks. I let them go and catch fresh ones to replace them. Also I have never had to hold them more than a month to get my target price. I don't believe any new legislation is needed. Let us have the freedom to fish according to the current laws and sell our eels according to the current laws. If DMR id worried about dead loss, put together a joint fisherman/biologist booked on eel care and give us the respect that most of us care about the eels and the fishery, and that we are doing our best to limit dead loss and provide a quality product to the buyer. Thank you.