



BAR HARBOR

EST. 2014

OYSTER COMPANY

Bar Harbor Oyster Company
105 Seabury Dr., Bar Harbor, ME 04609

To whom it may concern,

Bar Harbor Oyster Company supports the legislation of LD 1722. LD 1722 does not change the commissioner's authority to revoke a lease at any time for cause. LD 1722 seeks to direct the Commissioner of Marine Resources to renew a standard lease as soon as possible following receipt of a complete application for renewal. The intent of the bill is to reduce the administrative workload on the Department while protecting the public trust and environment. LD 1722 also simplifies the process of converting a limited purpose lease with no changes in the area occupied or operations conducted to a standard lease. The current process is complicated and lengthy and requires significant DMR staff time. If no changes to the operation are proposed and there has been no cause for revocation the Commissioner is directed to approve the conversion as soon as possible following receipt of a complete application.

Over the last two years DMR and MAA have conducted a series of listening sessions with both aquaculturalists and other stakeholders. In both series aquaculturalists clearly indicated that the backlog of lease applications was one of the most serious challenges to the sector. Treating lease renewals as a full adjudicatory process for an existing lease that in some cases has been operating for years and for which the department has found no cause to revoke significantly adds to the administrative workload of the department. The DMR has repeatedly indicated that the reason for the lease backlog was lack of adequate staff and a burdensome administrative workload. The industry has repeatedly suggested process improvements and supported the department's budget requests in front of the administration and the legislature's appropriations committee. The department now has more aquaculture staff than it ever has in its history. LD 1722 seeks to help solve some of the administrative and staffing challenges the department itself has identified.

In conclusion, Bar Harbor Oyster Company supports LD 1722. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Joanna Fogg