



Maine Lobstering Union

Local 207



150 Bar Harbor Rd, Trenton, ME 04506

1-28-2026

Senator Tepler, Representative Hepler, and honorable member of the Marine Resource Committee.

My name is Virginia Olsen. I am a licensed lobsterman, I sit on the Lobster Advisory Council, and work with the Maine Lobstering Union-Local 207.

LD 2002 An Act to Extend the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative to December 31, 2031.

First, I would like to give my views from the LAC on LD 2002 after attending the meeting yesterday on 1/27/26. The LAC had a long discussion about the "collaborative." The industry leaders do not want this program to go away, but we ALL agreed it needs some major changes and restructuring. It is very difficult, in its current state, to tease out the benefits for the fishermen who fund the program. Numerous suggestions from members of the LAC were well received. The LAC voted to support 1 additional year with the sunset provision of 12/31/2027. A vote for a 2-year sunset did not pass. A few folks wanted to keep the 2031 sunset, but no motion was made with that suggestion.

My personal feelings are that 1 year is not enough time to make the needed changes and see results. I feel it is more appropriate to extend for 2-years with a sunset of December 30th, 2028. Numerous seats on the "collaborative" will be filled this year, and we need some time to work with the "collaborative" to guide the necessary changes the industry would like to see. The MLMC has attended the last round of Zone Council meetings, and the feedback from fishermen is frustration with a lower cost per pound this year and a decrease in landings, while our costs go up. Industry is being stretched from all sides, and making a profit in the industry is getting more difficult by the day. While at a recent conference in Canada, we learned that spiny lobsters are now being grown in Vietnam, expanding their aquaculture and exporting many to China. I suggest we keep the MLMC, make much-needed changes, extend the MLMC for 2 years, and keep pushing Maine Lobster as the gold standard.

The executive board of Local 207 voted to support an extension of the MLMC for 2-years with a sunset clause for December 30th 2028.

We would also like to thank members of the MRC for their attendance at ASMFC, Zone Council, and LAC meetings. Your attendance shows that you are listening to fishermen and they are being heard. Thank you all.

Virginia Olsen

Maine Lobstering Union-Local 207

If you have any questions, please call, text, or email: 207-240-0556, volsen@district4.net

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Maine Lobstering Union-Local Lodge 207
LD 2002
See attached