



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Testimony of Rep. Peter Kent

LD 1452: An Act to Allow Municipalities with Shellfish Conservation Ordinances To Request
Permission to Prohibit Marine Worm Harvesting.
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources

Senator Johnson, Representative Kumiega and distinguished members of this committee, I am Representative Peter Kent representing District 65. I am here today to address concerns about LD 1452.

I have two major concerns with this legislation:

1. What exactly is the problem this legislation wants to address and is LD 1452 the solution.
2. The trajectory of this legislation risks the passage of Legislation without thoughtful and informed input.

1. What exactly is the problem this legislation is addressing?

Although not specifically stated, all indicators are that wormers are being targeted as a threat, or hindrance, to the clam population and therefore should be banned from shellfish conservation areas. This is an issue that has roots as far back as the late 1950s, when it was first brought before the Maine State Legislature and has reared its head perennially ever since.

Impact of worming on shellfish conservation areas was researched in the late 1990's and the findings printed in the *Journal of Shellfish Research* in 2001:

[see SHORT TERM EFFECTS OF COMMERCIAL CLAM AND WORM HARVESTING ON SURVIVAL AND GROWTH OF JUVENILES OF THE SOFT-SHELL CLAM]

The conclusion of this report, as stated in the *'Abstract'* is: ***“Unless clam managers actively take steps to deter predators by using netting or other means, blood wormers should continue to harvest commercially from areas closed to shellfishing without reprisal or fear that they are causing damage to populations of juvenile soft-shell clams.”***

My hope is that this committee will make sure that the conclusions of this research align with the intentions of this legislation. That this legislation is not moving forward on anecdotal evidence.

2. Thoughtful and informed legislation.

This brings me to my second concern and to an arena that, as a State Legislator, I can speak to with some degree of expertise. As a carry over bill this committee is up against a deadline that demands this committee go immediately into work session, ask for an extension, or kill the bill. I want this process to serve the interests that have come here today in a paced, measured and thoughtful manner.

LD 1452 was carried over from last year to allow time for the two industries to solve their own problem. One month ago clam diggers voted to kill the bill. Six days ago they voted to bring it back. Four days ago an amended version was distributed. Tensions and passions are running high and it is important that this committee not be swept forward by an arbitrary deadline. This committee needs to take the time to understand the problem LD 1452 is addressing and that it is putting forward the appropriate solution.

Thank You,

Peter S. Kent

	Value	\$1,014,667	\$592,386	\$1,547,293	\$1,747,931	3,240,484
seaweed						
	Pounds	12,224,349	11,621,922	12,941,956	15,164,508	15,093,477
	Value	\$373,005	\$379,355	\$323,480	\$437,991	421,326
shrimp						
	Pounds	8,491,782	4,792,021	12,272,114	10,132,077	4,817,110
	Value	\$4,166,412	\$1,926,048	\$6,660,005	\$7,627,447	\$4,597,633
soft clams						
	Pounds	9,764,154	9,306,958	10,210,953	11,588,098	11,051,707
	Value	\$12,825,057	\$11,686,086	\$13,044,689	\$15,853,767	15,643,700
spiny dogfish						
	Pounds	49,342	593,980	228,646	349,166	226,770
	Value	\$20,098	\$114,897	\$62,899	\$74,849	\$42,555
tuna						
	Pounds	42,059	101,647	166,685	197,298	218,891
	Value	263,839	610,604	1,282,894	1,782,108	2,173,734
urchins						
	Pounds	3,058,114	3,486,741	2,591,516	2,407,074	1,903,781
	Value	\$5,645,829	\$5,866,376	\$5,489,826	\$5,113,355	5,024,133
yellow eel						
	Pounds	12,496	2,525	3,038	4,065	11,113
	Value	\$41,862	\$7,575	\$9,113	\$15,244	32,006
Total Pounds		237,706,603	230,974,122	255,697,192	286,604,660	318,000,582
Total Value		\$365,111,562	\$327,954,522	\$456,845,679	\$433,855,660	\$527,689,114

*2012 data are preliminary; updated 7/1/13

*Pounds are live (whole) pounds; values are ex-vessel values