

**Testimony of
Chad Coffin,
President of the Maine Clammers Association**

**in SUPPORT of
LD 1452, “An Act To Allow Municipalities with Shellfish
Conservation Ordinances To Request Permission To Prohibit
Marine Worm Harvesting”**

LD 1452, “An Act To Allow Municipalities with Shellfish Conservation Ordinances To Request Permission To Prohibit Marine Worm Harvesting” is an important first step in efforts to restore Maine’s shellfish resources and marine biodiversity that have been virtually wiped out by invasive green crabs.

Invasive green crabs predate on both shellfish and worm populations. Towns in Maine are just starting to wake up to the devastation that green crabs are having on their marine resources. As a result, some Maine towns are contemplating implementing measures to protect their intertidal resources, including fencing or netting seeded areas, or using netting to encourage and safeguard wild clam recruitment. These protection and restoration efforts require significant investment from each community. LD 1452 allows towns to protect their investment by providing them with the ability to prohibit **any type** of harvesting from occurring in protected areas while the resource is restored.

It is simply not true that this bill excludes wormers from significant portions of the intertidal clam flats. No one is trying to curtail another person’s ability to make a living. However, if nothing is done to adequately protect our intertidal areas from green crabs, in a short time there will be nothing for anyone to harvest. That includes Maine’s wormers.

Shellfish resources are held as a public trust resource for all Mainers to enjoy, and as such it is the responsibility of our state and local governments to ensure their sustainability for ourselves as well as future generations. Mainers should be proud and thankful we have a true champion of marine resources in Sen. Stan Gersofsky. He understands the importance of investing in natural resource enhancement and that efforts that focus on active - rather than passive- resource management need our full support and deserve protection.