

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
IN SUPPORT OF LD 927**

“An Act to Minimize the Propagation of Invasive Plants”

SPONSORED BY: Representative ACKLEY of Monmouth

CO-SPONSORED BY: Representative FAY of Raymond
Representative Riseman of Harrison
Representative Tucker of Brunswick

DATE OF HEARING: March 11, 2019

Good morning Senator Dill, Representative Nadeau and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Francis Brautigam, Fisheries Director at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking on behalf of the Department, in support of **L.D. 927**. This bill requires the removal and/or opening of drain plugs and other devices that retain water and the draining of water from vessels on inland waters before being transported.

LD 927 represents a meaningful effort to reduce the transport and viability of transported invasive aquatic organisms (plants and critters) between waters within Maine, but perhaps even more importantly, between waters from other states and Maine. Boats visiting Maine pose a potentially greater threat, because the diversity and abundance of invasive aquatic threats are much greater outside the State of Maine. Requiring vessels in transport to remove and or open drain plugs, valves and other devices to enable water to drain from the hull, ballast tanks, and bilges will increase the opportunity to create dry conditions that will desiccate any invasive aquatic organisms that may be present. While this bill is supported, the Department recognizes the requirement to “drain” the vessel may pose some enforcement challenges in terms of assessing compliance. In addition, the ability for Warden Service to search boats, including livewells and other enclosed areas may not be undertaken without probable cause. Notwithstanding these limitations, the overall intent of this bill to drain and encourage dry conditions represents a positive step to reduce new infestations of invasive aquatic organisms, including plants. This proposed legislation is also supported by the Department of Environmental Protection.

I would be glad to answer any questions at this time or during the work session.