

OPPOSE

LD 308 – An Act Regarding the Saltwater Recreational Fishing Registry

Sponsor: Representative Jonathan McKane

Co-Sponsors: Representatives CHIPMAN of Portland; OLSEN of Phippsburg; PRESCOTT of Topsham; TILTON of Harrington; and Senators SNOWE-MELLO of Androscoggin; and TRAHAN of Lincoln

Summary: This bill repeals the saltwater recreational fishing registry.

Explanation: This bill repeals the recreational saltwater fishing registry, adopted in 2010, that currently provides a small boost in funding for important fisheries science and habitat improvement programs. It now costs \$5 for Mainers to register if they fish for striped bass and don't buy a regular fishing license. If this registry is eliminated, the federal government will likely charge Mainers more than \$5 and keep the proceeds for themselves. In New Jersey and Hawaii, the only coastal states that have failed to adopt a registry, federal agencies charge residents \$15. The saltwater fishing registry law was enacted after significant negotiation, compromise, and stakeholder involvement.

NRCM supported the final version of the saltwater fishing registry enacted in 2010 because the resources made available for fisheries science and habitat improvement are beneficial for strengthening Maine's fisheries populations. Repeal of the registry, loss of the revenue to the federal government, and likely imposition of a higher registry fee does not make sense.

NRCM Opposes LD 308.