

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
IN SUPPORT OF
L.D. 695**

“An Act To Require Biodegradable Hooks and Lures for Freshwater Fishing”

SPONSORED BY: Senator DAVIS of Piscataquis

CO-SPONSORED BY: Senator BLACK of Franklin
Senator DILL of Penobscot
Representative MASON of Lisbon
Representative MARTIN of Sinclair
Representative STEARNS of Guilford

DATE OF HEARING: February 27, 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, supporting the intent of **L.D. 695** to limit the presence of soft plastic lures and hooks in Maine waters.

The Department appreciates the concerns expressed by the bill’s sponsor, and proposes an alternative approach to explore strategies to limit the presence of soft plastic lures and noncorrosive hooks in Maine waters. To address stated concerns, the Department proposes a broader stakeholder discussion that will consider both regulatory and outreach strategies. This effort would greatly benefit from input provided by a stakeholder work group process. Such a process would also minimize unintended consequences of any statutory or regulatory recommendations. The Department would request that the committee hold over LD 695 until the next session to provide sufficient time to explore opportunities and address any unintended consequences. If supported, the Department would present recommendations to this committee in February of 2020.

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