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An Act Concerning the Labeling of Maine Shellfish Products

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, it is legal to bring shellfish into Maine from outside the State, clean it, shuck it or just store it and then sell it as a product of Maine; and

Whereas, the State must reserve its brand for shellfish native to this State, thereby protecting the brand; and

Whereas, the assurance that only Maine shellfish are labeled as Maine shellfish is crucial to the economy of this State; and

Whereas, it is vital that this legislation take effect before the summer tourist season, when shellfish sales are at their highest; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §6005 is enacted to read:

§ 6005. Labeling shellfish

A person who is authorized to hold or possess shellfish under chapter 623 may not label shellfish sold alive using the words "product of Maine" or any other similar words or terms that misleadingly suggest the shellfish was taken from the waters of this State unless the shellfish was in fact taken from the waters of the State.

The sale of shellfish labeled in violation of this section is a deceptive business practice in violation of Title 17#A, section 901. A violation of this section that results in a conviction under Title 17#A, section 901 is considered a conviction for a violation of a marine resources law under section 6351, subsection 1, paragraph A.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

Effective 90 days following adjournment of the 125th
Legislature, First Regular Session, unless otherwise indicated.