

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE**

**BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND FISHERIES AND
WILDLIFE**

IN OPPOSITION TO L.D. 242

**“AN ACT TO ALLOW HUNTERS TO WEAR HUNTER PINK INSTEAD OF
HUNTER ORANGE IN OCTOBER IN RECOGNITION OF BREAST CANCER
AWARENESS MONTH”**

SPONSORED BY: Representative Long of Sherman

CO-SPONSORED BY: Representative Crafts of Lisbon
Representative Dunphy of Embden
Representative O'Connor of Berwick
Representative Stanley of Medway
Representative Timberlake of Turner
Representative Verow of Brewer

DATE OF HEARING: February 24, 2015

Good afternoon Senator Davis, Representative Shaw and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Michael Sawyer, Supervisor of the Recreational Safety Unit at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking on behalf of the Department, in opposition to **L.D. 242**

Maine enjoys a very safe record in regards to hunting overall and specifically during our open firearms season on deer. Hunter orange or fluorescent orange has been mandatory for deer hunters to wear since 1973 in this state and has contributed, significantly to the decline of two party incidents over this time.

During the month of October, we typically have youth deer hunting day and may have opening day for firearms season. Both days typically have a high volume of participation by hunters. These hunters and non-hunters have become accustomed to seeing hunter orange on hunters afield and are also accustomed to wearing it while hunting. To our knowledge there is no common definition or standard for hunter pink which can be clearly measured for law enforcement purposes or for consistency amongst hunters who would be required to wear it.

In the past 6 years we have had a total of 39 hunting related incidents with an average of 6.5 per year. This figure takes into account all seasons for the various species we hunt. Two party hunting incidents during deer season are very low and we feel the use of two articles of hunter orange is a major reason for this. We certainly want to assure you that we support this noble idea to promote breast cancer awareness but would encourage discussion of alternatives to the proposal outlined in L.D. 242. I would be glad to answer any questions that you might have.