

LaCroix, Linda

From: Elaine Tselikis <etselikis@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 10, 2019 4:22 PM
To: LaCroix, Linda
Subject: Oppose LD 337_Please copy/distribute this testimony to IFW Committee

Re: Oppose LD 337: An Act to Create a Spring Bear Hunt in Maine

Dear Sen. Dill, Rep. Nadeau and Members of the IFW Committee: As a lifelong Maine citizen, I strongly oppose LD 337 and urge you to REJECT this immoral and totally inexcusable proposal to kill mama bears and their babies for blood sport. The vast majority (over 88%) of Mainers do not hunt or trap. Likewise, the overwhelming majority of Americans and Mainers strongly oppose trophy killing, and that's what this is about. (Please note that my language references *trophy/sport killing* – and not subsistence hunting.)

- Killing bears as they emerge from hibernation is profoundly cruel, immoral and biologically destructive. This law will kill mothers – who often leave their youngest in the den while they search for food alone -- and unleash slow and painful deaths of their babies who are unable to survive without them.
- Bears are already terrorized several months a year, starting in the fall when they're killed by abhorrent means: bow/arrow, traps, hounds/dogfighting or shot over bait. Spring bear killing will force them into a perpetual state of stress, denied Nature's right to live in peace with their families. Further, a host of other nursing mammals will experience significant biological disruption and potential death by such indiscriminate invasion of their quiet homes. And for those of us who love a peaceful hike in the woods after a long winter, our safe time will be stolen, again, by a small minority given preference to kill a trophy bear.
- Murdering mamas and babies will draw negative national attention and also stain Maine's tourism industry, which yields far more revenue for wildlife viewing than killing. The special interests of a minority of outfitters should not surpass our majority ethical interests to protect the sanctity of our wildlife and woods.
- Please implement "management" of humans. If you truly care about the supposed growth of the black bear population, STOP FEEDING THEM. Unregulated baiting dumps millions of tons of polluting, high calorie, processed foods into our woods. Real science affirms this increases reproduction in bears, disrupts forest ecology and attracts bears to human food sources. Even MDIFW's website confirms "Nutrition plays a major role in determining the number of cubs that are produced, and cub survival." So WHY kill mothers and babies while you also feed them? Or is that the real agenda – to perpetuate a trophy bear farm?
- MDIFW is losing its credibility and ethical compass in the eyes of more Mainers. In need of major reform, the Dept has become an extremist, captured agency, with a lethal mission dictated by the likes of Sportsman's Alliance of Maine, Safari Club International and Maine Trappers Association. Again, these dated and anti-science special interests represent a small minority of Maine's population, compared to most Mainers who neither engage in nor support harming bears.
- Why didn't MDIFW help save a Great Black Hawk months ago to prevent its recent death from frostbite? Citizens compassionately transported the bird to rescue. We love wildlife, value each individual and want them and their habitats protected. But instead of saving the hawk and promoting Compassionate Conservation, MDIFW spends resources pushing a Dark Ages agenda to kill mothers and babies; pushes "opportunities" for children to kill animals; inserts itself into public lands for this agenda; and promotes crossbows which will lead to further animal suffering, as well as increase danger to unsuspecting humans who can't hear silent weapons.

Killing new mothers and their babies? NO. Maine people do NOT want our wildlife treated this way. Like us, bears want to live, they feel love in their families and can feel pain and fear. Shy and intelligent, they want to be left alone but we keep invading their habitats. I urge the IFW Committee to immediately and soundly reject LD 337.

Thank you for considering my testimony,

Elaine Tselikis / South Portland