

LaCroix, Linda

From: Barbara Fiore <fiore.barbaraa@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 11, 2019 9:13 AM
To: IFW
Subject: Writing in strong opposition to LD 337

To Linda LaCroix, Committee Clerk -

Please copy and distribute the following comments to all of the members of the IFW committee. Thank you for your assistance in getting my message to them.

To: Chairs Senator Dill, Representative Nadeau, and Members of the IFW Committee:

I am writing to let you know of my strong opposition to LD 337, an act to create a spring bear hunt in Maine.

I lived in the Northwoods for many years and then in Western Maine. I witness bear hunting directly (and often saw hunters trying to chase down their dogs in the process)

Killing bears in the spring as they emerge from hibernation is fundamentally cruel and inhumane. It will cause the death of new mothers, and could result in the deaths of their babies who are far too young to survive in this harsh environment alone. Nothing could justify the slow, painful, and completely avoidable deaths of bear cubs. If put forward, this law could lead to an abundance of such deaths. Maine is not prepared with the resources necessary to support those lucky cubs who will be found orphaned and needing sanctuary, medical care, and rehabilitation. The very idea of putting new mothers and their babies at such risk is repugnant, and not how the people of Maine want to see our wildlife treated.

Bears are already terrorized for months out of the year by a fall hunting season that allows them to be killed by rifle, shotgun, handgun, bow and arrow, crossbow, traps and hounds. If a spring bear hunt is created, bears will lose even more precious time to live their lives in peace with their families. If there is a concern about the growth in the black bear population, Maine should first consider ending the baiting of bears, which puts millions of pounds of easily accessible, high calorie foods into our woods every August. If this bill passes, Maine will become one of the most hostile environments for bears in the entire country. Only a handful of states allow a spring bear hunt. Maine should continue to keep company with states that prioritize the welfare of bears, and say no to this disastrous proposal.

The vast majority of Mainers are not hunters. While bear hunting is highly lucrative for some hunters and small business, their economic interests should not trump our ethical interests to keep Maine bears safe. Like humans, bears are only given one life to live. Most Mainers chose not to engage in activities that end the lives of bears, and the committee should hear our call to end this proposal for a spring bear hunt immediately.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would appreciate a reply.

Sincerely,

Barbara A Fiore
Portland, Maine
(formerly of Greenville, ME and then Bethel, ME)