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LD 814

LD 814, An Act to Restrict the Daytime and Nighttime Killing of Coyotes, is designed to limit the killing of coyotes from the current nearly 24/7/365, to 'seasons' more in keeping with other species. It ought to become law.

Excessive killing of these important predators has led to extreme disruption of their highly social units. Without adult coyotes to teach young pups how to hunt their natural, wild prey - in that critical time frame after birth and before the young leave on their own - hungry, orphaned young individuals may prey on whatever they can find.

However, coyote pups brought up in a stable situation and taught how to hunt wild prey become important to our farmers. Many Maine farmers want to co-exist with coyotes who live stable lives, as these keystone predators are excellent rodent and pest control.

Equipped with education about coyotes' behavior, proper fencing, and perhaps a guard animal as deterrent, farmers raising domestic animals such as sheep, goats, chickens, etc. can and do live safely with coyotes nearby. I have seen and heard coyotes around my farm in North Norway for 49 years, and have never lost any sheep to their predation. Predation by dogs, yes. Coyotes, never. My llamas have been excellent guardians of our peaceful co-existence with coyote.

Restricting both daytime and nighttime killing to avoid that critical learning period, as LD 814 is designed to do, will allow coyotes to pursue their evolved and natural hunting of wild prey. It is right to work with Mother Nature, instead of against her.

Thank you for your attention to my testimony.