

Testimony in Support of LD 814, An Act to Restrict the Daytime and Nighttime Killing of Coyotes; Submitted via E-filing, 4/5/23

Submitted by: Dr. Albert M. Manville, Ph.D., C.W.B., and Adjunct Wildlife Professor, JHU;
Greenville Jct., ME 04442 residence

Senator LaFountain, Rep. Landry, and Members of the IF&W Committee:

By way of a very brief introduction, I am a Ph.D. Certified Wildlife Biologist (certified by The Wildlife Society), a retired Federal Supervisory/Senior Wildlife Biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and a part-time Senior Lecturer and Adjunct Wildlife Professor for the Advanced Academic Programs, Environmental Sciences and Policy Division, Johns Hopkins University. I also am a permanent resident of Maine. I served as Big Game Records Coordinator for the Boone and Crockett Club (B&CC) for several years, and was also an Official Measurer for the Club for more than a decade. I have studied predator-prey and human-predator interactions for decades, publishing extensively on the subjects, and have conducted field research on Alaska wolves and brown bears; MT and Alberta wolverines; MT grizzly bears; ME, MI, MT, WI, and LA black bears; and closely watched coyotes, coywolves and fishers around the Moosehead Lake Region for more than 3 decades. To help better understand and study carnivore behavior and dynamics, I've also immobilized and handled over 100 black bears, fitting a number of them with radio transmitting collars, and have helped immobilize and handle several grizzly bears.

LD 814 will not fully address Maine's outdated and archaic predator control program — still allowing the continued use of jacklighting and electronic predator calling devices, both of which some of us view as unethical hunting practices, which do not subscribe to the tenets of "fair chase" (B&CC). However, based on the time and date seasonal restrictions, and other limitations, LD 814 is a step in the right direction. On the other hand, LD 604 (An Act to Extend the Night Hunting Season for Coyotes), would only expand the State's flawed predator control program, whose purpose is to ostensibly provide more whitetail deer and moose for hunter harvest. I have heard this misguided, ill-informed, and unfounded argument raised by some in the hunting community for decades. IF&W does not support LD 604.

Similar to the effects of a bounty system on predators which generally do not work, the scientific evidence from coyote killing bills such as LD 604 has illustrated that such predator control programs don't result in prey population increases, except where all the predators have been eliminated (e.g., the extirpation of gray wolves in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem in the early 1900s, until their repopulation in the 1990s, resulting in huge increases in elk before the wolves were reintroduced). In some instances, the results of predator control programs are the opposite of what has been intended: disruptions to coyote population dynamics and family group structure have resulted in more breeding, pup production, and increased canid recruitment and survival, not less. Disruptions have also resulted in more coyote-human interactions (e.g., coyotes killing sheep), resulting in the use of the pesticide 1080, more coyote control, "denning," body snaring, leg-hold trapping, and other "tools." Studies continue today on the impacts of coywolf predator control.

Coyotes and coywolves have become the ecological replacements for timber wolves, the latter extirpated from Maine and New England in the early 1900s. However, both coyotes and coywolves provide important ecological services and critical habitat functions which seem to be conveniently dismissed or ignored by canid detractors. E.g., (1) coyotes and coywolves reduce rodent populations which can be carriers of deer and winter ticks (in turn serving as vectors for West Nile, Zika, parvo, Lyme, junta, distemper, and other viral and bacterial diseases, all which can affect humans and our pets). (2) Mice, rats, squirrels, raccoons, groundhogs, and other wildlife can cause extensive damage to our

gardens, residential and commercial crops. Both canids help control these pests. (3) Coyotes and coywolves are part of nature's sanitation services, consuming carrion, some of which may be infected with TB, chronic wasting disease, rabies, and other parasites and diseases. (4) Winter ticks are hugely negatively impacting Maine's population of moose. Coyotes and coywolves will help control the rodent reservoir hosts which carry these ticks. Both canids can help control populations of snowshoe hares especially when at peak numbers. (5) The argument that coyotes control populations of deer and moose is also flawed since coyotes are generally incapable of killing adult deer and moose, except in deep snow and very cold winter conditions such as in deer yards when the cervids are stressed. Arguably, deer fawns can be vulnerable to coyote predation, especially immediately after birth, and moose calves may be susceptible to canid predation, especially if they are stressed by heavy loads of winter ticks, and heat stress from the warming effects of climate change. The food habits and hunting dynamics of coywolves in Maine are currently being more thoroughly investigated.

With these issues in mind, please Vote Ought to Pass on LD 814. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill. Kindly submit my testimony for the administrative record. Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Albert M. Manville, C.W.B.

Albert Manville
Greenville Junction, ME
LD 814

Testimony in Support of LD 814, An Act to Restrict the Daytime and Nighttime Killing of Coyotes;
Submitted via E-filing, 4/5/23

Submitted by: Dr. Albert M. Manville, Ph.D., C.W.B., and Adjunct Wildlife Professor, JHU;
Greenville Jct., ME 04442 residence

Senator LaFountain, Rep. Landry, and Members of the IF&W Committee:

By way of a very brief introduction, I am a Ph.D. Certified Wildlife Biologist (certified by The Wildlife Society), a retired Federal Supervisory/Senior Wildlife Biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and a part-time Senior Lecturer and Adjunct Wildlife Professor for the Advanced Academic Programs, Environmental Sciences and Policy Division, Johns Hopkins University. I also am a permanent resident of Maine. I served as Big Game Records Coordinator for the Boone and Crockett Club (B&CC) for several years, and was also an Official Measurer for the Club for more than a decade. I have studied predator-prey and human-predator interactions for decades, publishing extensively on the subjects, and have conducted field research on Alaska wolves and brown bears; MT and Alberta wolverines; MT grizzly bears; ME, MI, MT, WI, and LA black bears; and closely watched coyotes, coywolves and fishers around the Moosehead Lake Region for more than 3 decades. To help better understand and study carnivore behavior and dynamics, I've also immobilized and handled over 100 black bears, fitting a number of them with radio transmitting collars, and have helped immobilize and handle several grizzly bears.

LD 814 will not fully address Maine's outdated and archaic predator control program — still allowing the continued use of jacklighting and electronic predator calling devices, both of which some of us view as unethical hunting practices, which do not subscribe to the tenets of "fair chase" (B&CC). However, based on the time and date seasonal restrictions, and other limitations, LD 814 is a step in the right direction. On the other hand, LD 604 (An Act to Extend the Night Hunting Season for Coyotes), would only expand the State's flawed predator control program, whose purpose is to ostensibly provide more whitetail deer and moose for hunter harvest. I have heard this misguided, ill-informed, and unfounded argument raised by some in the hunting community for decades. IF&W does not support LD 604.

Similar to the effects of a bounty system on predators which generally do not work, the scientific evidence from coyote killing bills such as LD 604 has illustrated that such predator control programs don't result in prey population increases, except where all the predators have been eliminated (e.g., the extirpation of gray wolves in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem in the early 1900s, until their repopulation in the 1990s, resulting in huge increases in elk before the wolves were reintroduced). In some instances, the results of predator control programs are the opposite of what has been intended: disruptions to coyote population dynamics and family group structure have resulted in more breeding, pup production, and increased canid recruitment and survival, not less. Disruptions have also resulted in more coyote-human interactions (e.g., coyotes killing sheep), resulting in the use of the pesticide 1080, more coyote control, "denning," body snaring, leg-hold trapping, and other "tools." Studies continue today on the impacts of coywolf predator control.

Coyotes and coywolves have become the ecological replacements for timber wolves, the latter extirpated from Maine and New England in the early 1900s. However, both coyotes and coywolves provide important ecological services and critical habitat functions which seem to be conveniently dismissed or ignored by canid detractors. E.g., (1) coyotes and coywolves reduce rodent populations which can be carriers of deer and winter ticks (in turn serving as vectors for West Nile, Zika,

parvo, Lyme, parvovirus, distemper, and other viral and bacterial diseases, all which can affect humans and our pets). (2) Mice, rats, squirrels, raccoons, groundhogs, and other wildlife can cause extensive damage to our gardens, residential and commercial crops. Both canids help control these pests. (3) Coyotes and coywolves are part of nature's sanitation services, consuming carrion, some of which may be infected with TB, chronic wasting disease, rabies, and other parasites and diseases. (4) Winter ticks are hugely negatively impacting Maine's population of moose. Coyotes and coywolves will help control the rodent reservoir hosts which carry these ticks. Both canids can help control populations of snowshoe hares especially when at peak numbers. (5) The argument that coyotes control populations of deer and moose is also flawed since coyotes are generally incapable of killing adult deer and moose, except in deep snow and very cold winter conditions such as in deer yards when the cervids are stressed. Arguably, deer fawns can be vulnerable to coyote predation, especially immediately after birth, and moose calves may be susceptible to canid predation, especially if they are stressed by heavy loads of winter ticks, and heat stress from the warming effects of climate change. The food habits and hunting dynamics of coywolves in Maine are currently being more thoroughly investigated.

With these issues in mind, please Vote Ought to Pass on LD 814. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill. Kindly submit my testimony for the administrative record. Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Albert M. Manville, C.W.B.