



April 7th, 2023

Dear Senator LaFountain, Representative Landry, and distinguished members of the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife,

My name is Lauren Pickford and I am the Planning and Land Use Manager of the Lakes Environmental Association (LEA), which serves the Lake Region of Western Maine and all of Maine's lakes through the Maine Lake Science Center.

**LEA strongly supports LD 958: "An Act to Expand Protections to Maine's Loons from Lead Poisoning by Prohibiting the Sale and Use of Certain Painted Lead Jigs"**

LD 958 is important legislation aimed at closing a loophole in Maine's lead tackle laws that endangers many of the state's beloved species on the lake. Lead poisoning is a major cause of death for adult loons and other wildlife, primarily resulting from ingesting small painted lead jigs. Despite current laws and education campaigns, lead poisoning remains a significant problem, and action is necessary. The passage of LD 958 would aid in preventing the unnecessary deaths of wildlife from lead tackle.

This legislation is the next logical step in Maine's ongoing efforts to phase out the use and sale of lead tackle, which is already well underway in the state. However, the continued availability of painted lead jigs presents a significant obstacle to achieving this goal. The support for LD 958 goes beyond the conservation community, with many Mainers recognizing the importance of protecting the state's natural resources.

If passed, LD 958 would send a powerful message about the significance of safeguarding Maine's natural resources and the role that each of us can play in securing future generations' ability to experience the state's beauty and wonder. Ultimately, this legislation would aid in preserving the state's diverse wildlife for generations to come.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I encourage you to vote "ought to pass" on Thank you,

Lauren Pickford  
Planning and Land Use Manager



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