

Susan Kistenmacher
Farmingdale
LD 716

Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts, and Members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee,

I am writing this testimony in support of LD 716, An Act to Restrict the Hunting of Coyotes. I write this as a concerned Maine citizen, a Maine Master Naturalist, a former science teacher and a current environmental educator. Maine's laws governing the killing of coyotes need to be adapted with an understanding of the importance of predators and specifically carnivores in the natural world. The rules which allow for the indiscriminate slaughter of coyote are based on the archaic idea that sees coyote as a "varmit", a ferocious slayer of deer and livestock, and serving no purpose.

This is not true. A healthy coyote population is an important part of the ecosystem in Maine. As a keystone species they help to maintain the balance of nature.

Coyote's main diet consists of rodents, grasshoppers, snow shoe hare, wild turkey, Canada geese and when available, berries. They also eat old, sick, and injured deer.

In this way they keep the rodent population in check and also keep the deer population healthy.

LD 716 would be a small step in rectifying the situation by not allowing the killing of coyotes from April 1- September 30 during their pup raising season.

Please pass LD 716 and give coyotes a chance to live in Maine.

Sue Kistenmacher
Farmingdale, ME