



March 12, 2025

**Testimony in opposition to LD 820 “Resolution, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Establish the Right to Hunt and Fish.”**

Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife,

I am Beth Gallie, President of Maine Animal Coalition, a moderate animal rights group. I am also an attorney. Today I listened to the public hearing on **LD 820 Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Establish the Right to Hunt and Fish.**

I believe that LD 820 is a solution without a problem. Representative Caruso, the sponsor of the bill, did not provide any evidence to support the need for LD 820. Instead, she vaguely mentioned “people from away.” (I don’t think she was talking about the NRA who drafted this bill and has helped pass it in over twenty states.)

LD 820 is confusing. One person testified that LD 820 would outlaw referendum on hunting methods. This issue should be discussed at the work session!

LD 820 is also intentionally vague to make it more palatable. Examples are “reasonable” and “preferred.” Such vagueness invites future litigation.

One person testified that the bill was needed to prevent harassment of hunters. However, it is already illegal to “*intentionally or knowingly interfere with the lawful hunting, fishing or trapping of a wild animal, wild bird or fish.*” See Title 12 Maine Revised Statutes section 10653.

Others, including the bill’s sponsor, spoke of LD 820 as a jobs bill. This is problematic. Non-consumptive enjoyment of wildlife brings in far more dollars than hunting. Also, the Constitution is not the proper place for a jobs bill.

Finally, supporters of the bill expressed respect for science in guiding the management of Maine’s wildlife. Yet the bill states, “Public hunting and fishing are the preferred means of managing and controlling wildlife.”