

**TESTIMONY OF SUSANNA RICHER -- IN SUPPORT OF
“L.D. 1293 "An Act to Prohibit Coyote-killing Contests in Maine””
Committee On Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
April 2, 2025**

Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts, and distinguished members of the Committee:

The [North American Model of Wildlife Conservation](#) (NAMWC) holds that animals should only be killed for legitimate, non-frivolous reasons, and that science should guide wildlife conservation decisions. The indiscriminate killing of animals for prizes directly violates the wanton waste standards set forth by the NAMWC prohibiting casual killing and wasting of wildlife.

The Department of Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife relies on the NAMWC model to create state hunting policies except in the case of the Eastern Coyote. Coyotes are the ONLY game animal in Maine NOT included in the [Wanton Waste statute](#).

Currently in Maine, wanton waste is encouraged by coyote killing contests as well as by an open, year-round season on coyotes without bag limits. The deceased animals are often treated like garbage - discarded in the woods, in the fields and in our waterways. Improper disposal of carcasses results in toxins, such as lead ammunition, that threaten other wildlife and contaminate our soil and water.

These competitions do not align with Maine's traditional principles of fair-chase hunting nor are they an effective science-based wildlife management tool.

Indiscriminate killing of coyote is scientifically proven to be an ineffective means of population control. Studies have shown when there are unregulated and ongoing attempts at killing coyotes, they respond with “[compensatory reproduction](#).” This means that when there are attempts to reduce a stable population, coyotes respond by increasing the number and size of their litters. However, if left alone, to develop stable, healthy packs, coyotes will self-regulate their population to lower numbers. Stable, healthy coyote packs also tend to stay away from humans and hunt intended prey, such as rodents.

Coyotes play an important role in maintaining healthy ecosystems and species diversity. **Through the predator/prey relationship, coyotes are critical to controlling disease transmission such as tick-borne illness and rabies. By killing these predators without restriction, we destroy ecosystems and encourage the spread of disease.** They also consume animal carcasses, increase biodiversity, remove sick animals from the gene pool, and protect crops.

Through relentless slaughter of coyotes, we negatively impact our health, our environment and the well-being of our wildlife populations. We are our own worst enemy.

Passage of LD 1293 would be a small step forward in moving Maine's coyote “management” practices into alignment with modern day wildlife science and would uphold Maine’s values of conservation and responsible stewardship of its shared natural resources.

I urge you to support LD 1293 and allow Maine to become the 11th state since 2018 to ban these cruel and ineffective contests. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Susanna Richer
Portland ME