

Kurt Jepson
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LD 1293
Rep Pugh,

I hope this correspondence finds you well.

As a resident Maine outdoorsman for all of my 67 years, I am writing to express my concerns with LD 716.

I suspect I've logged more hours deep in the Maine woods than the sponsors of this bill and have witnessed first hand the results of unmitigated "coy-dog" predation. Nothing in nature dies a "pretty" death, a necessary balance. Fawn mortality is already extremely high, especially when the snow pack extends into spring.

The key here is the word "balance". Advocates for this bill I'm sure state that the year round hunting of coyotes leads to an "imbalance" in nature. That is a valid point in an undisturbed ecosystem, but that is far from what we have here in Maine.

Rabid residential and infrastructure development statewide has compromised whitetail deer habitat, stressing their feeding, breeding and yarding cycles. Deer adjust fairly well to urban intrusion, but not as well as coyotes. They are extremely adaptable, durable and socially well organized. They have no natural predators outside of their packs.

Coyotes are rarely seen in the open while in the woods due to their high level of intelligence, but when they are, sportsmen should retain the option to exercise control mechanisms within current "varmint" statues.

The deer in this state have a much more difficult time wintering and procreating than their highly adaptable predators. Untethered development in our state driven by migration "supply and demand" principles is not going anywhere. How long will it be before an extreme winter ,or the "winter tick" jumps from moose to deer, decimates the herd?

My final thought is, should we not leave the health and management of our wildlife to the capable hands of our state biologists and Dept Wildlife? Why do we employ that staff if we do not base policy on their recommendations?

When non-connected, emotional, political interests place "too many cooks in the kitchen" misguided legislation results.

Not that it is important to this discussion, but personally I neither hunt deer or coyote (I fish, camp, hike and bird hunt) and am a registered Independent.

Thank you in advance for your careful consideration.

Respectfully,
Kurt K Jepson
Scarborough/ Stockholm