



SIERRA CLUB

MAINE CHAPTER

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To: Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee
From: Matt Cannon, Sierra Club Maine
Date: April 8, 2025
Re: **REVISED Testimony in Support of L.D. 1241: An Act to Establish the Make Change for Wildlife Program to Support the Maine Endangered and Nongame Wildlife Fund.**

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

I write on behalf of Sierra Club Maine, representing over 22,000 supporters and members statewide. Founded in 1892, Sierra Club is one of our nation's oldest and largest environmental organizations. We work diligently to amplify the power of our 3.8 million members to balance both conservation and transitioning our economy to renewable energy. To that end, we urge you to vote "Ought to Pass" on L.D. 1241.

This bill would allow point-of-sale donations to bolster the Maine Endangered and Nongame Wildlife Fund ("the Fund"), which was created to support conservation of Maine's most at-risk wildlife through population surveys, monitoring, and habitat conservation. This fund has been instrumental in some of our state's most famous conservation success stories, but its revenue has not kept up with the need.

L.D. 1241 is a bill designed to help us address this funding problem. This legislation would create the "Make Change for Wildlife" program in order to help generate voluntary contributions to benefit the Maine Endangered and Nongame Wildlife Fund. It uses a common method for donations at point-of-sale. Businesses collect customer contributions at the point-of-sale by offering customers the option to "round up" their purchases to the nearest dollar. The difference or additions would go directly to the Fund. In order to help incentivize participation, businesses have the option to deduct an amount equal to the funds voluntarily contributed by the taxpayer up to \$10,000 annually from state corporate income taxes. The goal of this program is to diversify contribution streams as current levels are inadequate in addressing the basic science and habitat conservation needs necessary to ensure healthy wildlife populations in Maine.

As our biodiversity crisis worsens and species' populations continue to drop, it is essential that we fund the work to protect our state's most vulnerable fish and wildlife. L.D. 1241 is one unique opportunity to fund this work. We urge 'Ought to Pass.'

Sincerely,

Matt Cannon
Sierra Club Maine Chapter
State Conservation & Energy Director