



Holly Rae Eaton

P.O. Box 277

Deer Isle, ME 04627

Phone: (207) 610-9281

Holly.Eaton@legislature.maine.gov

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 STATE HOUSE STATION

AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002

(207) 287-1400

TTY: Maine Relay 711

April 16, 2025

***Testimony of Representative Holly Eaton in opposition to
LD 1438: Resolve, Regarding Deer Hunting on Mount Desert Island
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife***

Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts, and esteemed members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee, my name is Representative Holly Eaton, and I represent House District 15, which includes part of Mount Desert Island. I am submitting this written testimony in opposition to LD 1438.

This bill seeks to open Mount Desert Island to deer hunting, lifting a ban that has been in place since 1905. While I understand the concerns regarding deer overpopulation, I am deeply concerned about the process through which this legislation was introduced. Neither I, Representative Gary Friedmann (who represents the other part of MDI), nor Senator Nicole Grohoski were consulted prior to the submission of this bill.

Since the bill was introduced, Senator Grohoski, Representative Friedmann, and I have worked together to contact each of the municipalities on Mount Desert Island to ensure they were aware of LD 1438 and had an opportunity to weigh in. We heard unanimously that, while communities are open to engaging in future discussions around deer management, they are not currently comfortable with this legislation moving forward.

Representative Friedmann will be present at today's hearing and is welcome to share that he and I are aligned in our position. We are both open to working collaboratively with municipalities, the department, and other stakeholders to explore solutions if needed—but this bill is not the appropriate vehicle for those changes.

It's also important to note that current law already allows for local governing bodies to initiate changes to hunting regulations under Title 12, Section 11402, Subsection 4. That process respects the authority of local communities and should be upheld.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to vote "Ought Not to Pass" on LD 1438.

District 15: Brooklin, Deer Isle, Eagle Island Township, Frenchboro, Southwest Harbor,
Stonington, Swan's Island, Tremont, Isle au Haut, Vinalhaven