

To: The Honorable Senator Joseph Baldacci, Senate Chair
The Honorable Representative Tiffany Roberts, House Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
c/o Office of the Revisor of Statutes
State House Station Number Thirteen
Augusta, Maine 0433

Re: Request for Consideration Regarding LD 1438 - An Act to Require the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to Allow Hunting on Mount Desert Island

Dear Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts, and Members of the Committee,

As a Selectboard member of the town of Tremont it is extremely disappointing to learn that a legislator, one who does not represent our town, is sponsoring a bill that changes a 120 year old history of our island without so much as reaching out to advise us what he is putting in motion. This bill deals only with Tremont and the three other towns on MDI, none of which are represented by the bill's sponsor. Like Tremont, none of the others have received so much as a heads up. None have been asked how this would affect them.

Even further insult is added by having a public hearing scheduled in such a quick fashion that it isn't possible for towns to hold local discussion about the bill due to public notice requirements and meeting schedules. Keeping our towns from voicing concerns over breaking with over a century of tradition and suddenly allowing potentially hundreds of strangers with high powered weapons to wander around unsupervised, is extremely troubling.

The fact that these four towns encompass the largest and busiest part of Maine's major tourist magnet, Acadia National Park, further complicates this proposal. Acadia is unlike most national parks where you enter those parks through an entrance gate and are inside the park until you pass through an exit gate. With Acadia, you are crossing in and out the park as you drive around MDI. Most time the boundary is only marked by short stakes 2 or 3 inches wide and that are very easy to miss. It would be extremely easy for a hunter to unknowingly cross into Acadia National Park and be in direct contact with unsuspecting tourists behaving in a manner unsafe for a hunting zone.

This concern and several others should be fully addressed by the local citizens, law enforcement, and governments when the bill is being considered.

Whether or not deer hunting should be allowed on Mount Desert Island is a topic that has been discussed multiple times by every town on the island. Every time, every town has always ended up deciding that an open deer hunting season is not appropriate. For a legislator from elsewhere to just step in and try to force deer hunting here with even an opportunity for the affected towns to participate is just wrong.

Please either kill this bill now or at least postpone further action until those directly involved have an opportunity to participate and express their concerns.

Sincerely,
Kevin Buck
Selectboard member
Tremont