



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Testimony of Rep. Allison Hepler presenting

LD 163, An Act to Increase Communication Between the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and Lifetime License Holders by Requiring Free License Renewals Under Certain Circumstances

before the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

Good afternoon, Senator Lafountain, Representative Landry and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Allison Hepler, and I represent the towns of Arrowsic, Georgetown, Phippsburg, West Bath, and Woolwich. I am pleased to present **LD 163, An Act to Increase Communication Between the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and Lifetime License Holders by Requiring Free License Renewals Under Certain Circumstances.**

This bill came from the Department, who can quite capably describe its position, but I support it for a number of reasons. First, we all appreciate data by which we can develop or modify initiatives. Here's one example: I submitted a bill this session regarding a benefit for immediate family members of veterans and found out that there's not a good way to track the number of veterans who currently use this benefit.

This bill will also provide us with better and more complete information around the actual number of hunters in Maine. As a member of the Marine Resources Committee, I know all too well how information about how many lobster license holders are actually fishing helps the Department and the industry estimate stock assessments.

Finally, annual re-registration of these lifetime license holders allows the Department to provide important educational information to these people, whether it's to tell them about electronic tagging of turkeys, or last year's important public health warning regarding deer in Fairfield.

Thanks for your time. I'm happy to answer any questions as I can.