

Opposition to LD 814

Good morning my name is Matt Fournier. I live in Richmond Maine. I'm a registered Maine guide, avid hunter, outdoorsman, houndsman and trapper. I'm from the last generation to grow up without video games. The woods were my playground. My brothers and I grew up fishing, hunting and roaming the woods miles from home. The reason I explain this is because boots on the ground gathers more accurate information than someone sitting around in their home. I want to shed some light on 3 major bold face lies I've heard coming from proponents of this bill.

The first Lie is that coyotes decrease the amount of ticks and Lyme disease. For starters every coyote I have ever seen taken in the spring, summer, and fall have been absolutely loaded with ticks. There are far fewer ticks on deer than coyotes. Their theory is coyotes eat the mice and other small rodents and this reduces the tick population. Possums are said to be wonderful tick eaters yet often fall prey to Coyotes. Before coyotes arrived in Maine (1950s-1960s wikipedia) we had an abundant fox population Coyotes are well known for hunting down and killing foxes. I have a quote from Roland Kays from the University of North Carolina who took part in a study of the relationship between fox and coyotes. "Coyotes are well known to persecute foxes. They go out of their way, more than you see in other interactions between species to bully chase and kill smaller foxes." End quote. Foxes were natural and abundant in Maine before coyotes arrived. Foxes are quite capable of controlling small rodents and cleaning up the remains of deceased animals.

Second Major Lie is this new Term coined by non hunters called "Denning". It is alleged in their definition of this term that houndsman have their hounds follow coyotes to their den and use poles with hooks to spear and hook the puppies to be dragged out of their dens and meet a horrific demise. They also claim that this is perfectly legal

with current laws. This is a lie to tug on heart strings. Under general laws on hunting at Maine.gov it clearly states Wild animals and wild birds may be hunted only by use of rifles, handguns, shotguns (not larger than 10gauge), muzzleloader, hand held bow and arrow, crossbow or falconry. I have run coyote hounds with several large groups of hunters. Nobody carries such a device as is described in their claims. This is to portray hunters as cruel, evil monsters to the general public.

Third and final point is the false claim that hunting coyotes increases the population. Why is it that hunting Moose, Deer, Bears, fox, bobcats and wolves decreases their population but hunting coyotes increases their population?? According to several studies coyote females don't breed their first mating season(February). So reducing the number of females before they reach their second year reduces the number of coyotes that could breed. The coyote population is rising. This increase is because of suitable habitat and decrease in hunting and trapping. Coyotes are here to stay, but need to be managed as best as we can. Thank you.