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THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

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**Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife on LD 205 "An Act to Amend the Bag Limit for Turkey"
Public Hearing: March 12, 2025**

Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts and members of the joint standing committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, I am Senator Jeff Timberlake and I am here to present LD 205, "An Act to Amend the Bag Limit for Turkey" and ask for your support.

I have put this bill forward due to the significant increase in Maine's wild turkey population in recent years, which has been driven in part by the fact that turkeys can hatch up to three times per year. While the reintroduction efforts from the late 1970s have been a success, the turkey population has now grown beyond what local communities and the environment can sustainably support.

Overpopulation is causing serious issues, particularly for our farmers. Crops such as strawberries, pumpkins, apples, and even tree buds are being damaged by wild turkeys, disrupting both agriculture and the natural balance of our ecosystem.

Because wild turkeys can hatch multiple times each year, their population is expanding at a rate that the environment and local communities can't keep up with. In response, we need to consider opening up the hunting season and increasing hunting opportunities to help manage their numbers.

I am proposing that we align the wild turkey bag limit with the partridge bag limit, as this approach has proven effective in managing the partridge population. By giving hunters a greater opportunity to help control turkey numbers, we can reduce crop damage and protect Maine's agricultural landscape.

The partridge bag limit has been a successful model for population control, and applying a similar strategy to turkeys will help maintain a healthy balance between farming and wildlife.

I urge the committee to support this legislation. Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions.