



MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002
(207) 287-1440
TTY: (207) 287-4469

March 3, 2025 - Testimony in opposition of LD 716: *An Act to Restrict the Hunting of Coyotes*

Good afternoon Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts, and members of the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Representative Billy Bob Faulkingham, and I serve as the House Republican Leader. I represent House District 12, which includes the towns of Franklin, Gouldsboro, Hancock, Sorrento, Sullivan, Winter Harbor, and Steuben.

I am here today to strongly oppose ***LD 716 - An Act to Restrict the Hunting of Coyotes***, which seeks to prohibit coyote hunting for six months each year. This bill, if passed, would have serious consequences for our deer population, the balance of our state's wildlife, and the ability of Maine residents to access important food sources.

Coyotes are apex predators, and without proper management, they can decimate the deer herd. While the state can regulate how many deer hunters harvest each year, it cannot regulate how many deer coyotes kill. If this bill passes, the unchecked coyote population will lead to significant losses in the deer herd, harming not only hunters and conservation efforts but also those who rely on game meat as a local, sustainable food source. While there are currently plenty of deer for coyotes to prey on, continuing to restrict coyote hunting risks reaching a tipping point where the coyote population outpaces the deer population's ability to recover.

Furthermore, it's crucial to recognize that deer, rabbits, grouse, and other game species that coyotes prey upon are vital food sources for many Maine residents. With 90% of our food being imported from outside the state, local game plays an essential role in ensuring food security for our communities. Proper coyote management ensures that these game species remain abundant, allowing hunters to continue providing food for their families and neighbors.

Hunters will never eliminate all coyotes, but if left unchecked, coyotes could significantly reduce or even eliminate the deer population in certain areas. Under the current system, coyote hunting is already regulated, with 52 days where hunting is prohibited. This provides more than enough oversight and balance.

For these reasons, I urge you to oppose LD 716. Do not pass this bill, as it would jeopardize our deer population, local food sources, and the broader wildlife management efforts that are vital to Maine's way of life.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Billy Bob Faulkingham".

Rep. Billy Bob Faulkingham
House Republican Leader