

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE**

**BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL
JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

IN SUPPORT OF L.D. 1604

**An Act To Reclassify Certain Offenses under the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
Laws and Motor Vehicle Laws and Increase the Efficiency of the Criminal Justice
System**

SPONSORED BY: Representative WARREN of Hallowell.

DATE OF HEARING: February 4, 2022

Good afternoon Senator Deschambault, Representative Warren and members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee. I am Dan Scott, Colonel for Maine Warden Service at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking on behalf of the Department, in support of the newly amended version of **L.D. 1604**.

We do want to explain that our support for this bill is only in relation to the Title 12 portion which impacts Fish and Wildlife. Our testimony does not extend to the Title 29-A portion and we would defer any questions or comments to other agencies who have jurisdiction such as Maine State Police or the Secretary of State.

Over the years there have been a several endeavors to decriminalize various parts of Title 12. The most significant being in the early 2000s when many of the recreational vehicle statutes were decriminalized. Our position has always been to oppose any language which would decriminalize resource related violations, serious licensing violations and any public safety issues.

The Title 12 portion of LD 1604, as amended, seeks to decriminalize numerous minor crimes and licensing offenses throughout Title 12. We support the specific sections outlined in the amendment as well as the additional language directing the Chief Judge to set the fine amounts.

I am available to answer any questions at this time or during a work section.