



February 9, 2021

Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
c/o Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: **LD 199**: An Act To Amend Certain Fish and Wildlife Laws and Related Provisions

Dear Senator Dill, Representative Landry, and Members of the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers (BHA) is the fastest growing hunting and angling group in North America. BHA seeks to ensure North America's outdoor heritage of hunting and fishing in a natural setting by supporting land conservation, public access to hunting and fishing areas, and sound management of fish and wildlife and their habitats.

On behalf of BHA's members in Maine we urge you to support LD 199, which was submitted by the Department. While there are many components to this bill that we support, we would like to highlight two sections that are of particular importance to our membership.

Sec. 13. 12 MRSA §12304-B 5 §12304-B. Condition of animal presented for registration. There is something special about hunting deep in the backcountry. Hunting in these places creates a sense of freedom, challenge and solitude that is increasingly trampled by the twin pressures of growing population and increasing technology. However, current regulations requiring that the entire animal be presented for registration limit the distance hunters are willing to hunt away from roads, which results in more crowding and more potential for conflicts with landowners and other recreationists. In addition, the time required to transport an intact carcass from a remote location increases the risk of meat spoilage during early season hunts. We support the revisions that require all the head and all edible meat of a bear, deer or moose to be presented for registration while allowing most inedible portions of the carcass to remain in the forest. While we are supportive of the spirit of these changes, we recommended two minor changes to the bill.

- **Paragraph A.** As written the bill would require that the upper portions of the legs be presented for registration along with the head and meat. There is no need to remove these large bones, and therefore we recommended that the language be changed to allow all bones except for the head to remain in the forest.
- **Paragraph C.** This section should clarify what constitutes proof of sex. Specifically, in the case of a deer or moose is the head enough, or do some of the external sexual organs need to be submitted as well?

Allowing the animal to be dismembered for ease of transportation and leaving parts that are not of use, will enable Maine hunters to hunt deeper into backcountry locations.

Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §10652, 8 §10652. Abuse of another person's property. While Backcountry Hunters & Anglers does extensive work on the behalf of public land, in Maine access to private lands is a significant component our outdoor heritage. Continued access to private lands depends on the ability of the hunting and angling community to maintain positive relationships with landowners. Unfortunately, respect for private property is sometimes lacking. We also would like to express our support for the proposed revision to clarify and expand the authority of the law prohibiting the abuse of another person's property.

Sincerely,

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