

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF Id 544-AN ACT TO ELIMINATE MOOSE PERMITS FOR HUNTING LODGES

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I want to applaud Mr. Kelso for requesting and for speaking out in support of this bill. He deserves credit for speaking out for justice against a powerful hunting lobby.

As Mr. Kelso noted, guides/hunting lodges are paid as much as \$20,000 for a single moose permit. This should be a crime-not a sanctioned sale of the public's wildlife. I turned off the public hearing due to disgust. As confirmed by the hunting industry, it's all about the money.

It is interesting that no one that I heard brought up the North American Model for Wildlife Conservation, primarily tenets 2 and 7. Wildlife should not be sold to the highest bidder. Wildlife are not to be a commodity, bought and sold for financial enrichment. It is also interesting to note that whenever it benefits them, pro-hunters are very quick to cite the Model when it supports their case.

The statute that this bill would eliminate was the beginning of a slippery slope of selling wildlife to the highest bidder and it was only a matter of time before the infighting began over allocation of moose.

Maine's fish and wildlife resources belong to everyone and to no one. All should have equal opportunity to access these resources.

Thank you.