

Lowell Woodman
Monmouth

I am writing in opposition to LD544 - An act to eliminate moose permits for hunting lodges. Since 2019 the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife have offered hunting lodges/camps/outfitters an opportunity to boost their business with this opportunity. As I am sure you are aware the sporting lodges, camps and outfitters have struggled to maintain a quality experience for clients from around the world. This does not come without a lot of expense. These permits that are sold for premium prices are beneficial to these businesses and help boost the economy in many rural areas of the state, where it is needed the most. I read a statistic that it would take 8 normal lottery moose permits to replace the income to various locations throughout the state that these permits provide. This year there were approximately 60 permits that went to outfitters. That represents approximately 500 of the 3078 permits available this year. To put that into perspective the State of Maine would have to provide approximately 500 more permits to replace the benefit to various other businesses.

These permits benefit many different businesses, not just the lodge, camp or outfitters. Guides, cook staff, meat cutters, sporting goods stores, grocery stores, gas stations, etc. All of these businesses are local and help support the Maine economy.

The first year these permits were issued there was a lot of opposition to them that I observed, (mostly on social media). The majority were other guides/outfitters who were not properly licensed to apply for these permits. It only takes a quick google search to see the number of guides/outfitters who are offering meals and lodging on various hunts and then a comparison to the number of properly licensed lodges, guides, or outfitters to see that the 90 or so lodges properly licensed are in the minority.

I have been fortunate enough to receive a permit in 2019 and another one this year. While I do believe there are a number of ways to improve this program, eliminating it would in effect be throwing the baby out with the bathwater, and would remove that financial boon from many businesses within the State of Maine.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I can be reached via phone at (207) 557-2423 or email at nwomaine@gmail.com if you have any questions.

Thank you
Lowell Woodman