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Senator Dill, Representative Landry, and members of the Committee On Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. My family owns over 150 acres of farm and forest land in Gorham and I act as their agent coordinating with those who wish to use the land for hunting. I also lease an additional 150 acres. I am a former county president of Cumberland County Farm Bureau and a former State Committee member of Maine Farm Bureau. I am not currently a member of Maine Farm Bureau and I have never agreed with their position on Sunday hunting in the past which only represents a portion of landowners.

I was first exposed to Sunday hunting when I went to college in New York. Sunday hunting is the norm there and it simply works. I never heard anyone in New York complain about Sunday hunting. New York also offers sportsmen many acres of State-owned land available for hunting.

For many working people, the weekend is the only time available to hunt, bad weather on a Saturday can ruin a person's chance of being able to hunt that weekend. I have never bought into the argument that Sunday is the only day some people can feel safe going in the woods. The truth is, their decision is based on unfounded fear. If they go walking in the woods and don't dress up like a deer on a Saturday, the odds of them getting shot are less than dying from COVID-19 and certainly less than being hit as a pedestrian walking along a public way.

Maine and Massachusetts are the only states that don't allow Sunday hunting. It was never about "feeling safe" for one day of the week during hunting season, it is an old Blue Law preventing hunting on the Sabbath. Maine is now one of the most un-religious states in the nation, yet we hold on to this old Blue Law. Even as a Christian, I see no theological reason to hold onto the ban on Sunday hunting.

LD 1033 strikes the right balance by allowing landowners to hunt on their own land on Sunday, or allow landowners to give permission for others to hunt on their land on Sunday. This is a step in the right direction as I believe that all land access should require the permission of the landowner. This bill is more about property rights and having the right to do as you please on your own land.

I request that the committee support this bill.