

Testimony on LD 1213 HP0888 An Act To Provide the Option of Online or Telephonic Tagging of Harvested Big Game Animals

Good morning Senator Dill, Representative Landry, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, my name is Dana Valleau. I grew up in Orono, Maine and graduated from the University of Maine with a degree in Wildlife Management, and am a Certified Wildlife Biologist, which is an international certification administered by The Wildlife Society. I am also a Master Registered Maine Guide. I would like to offer testimony in support of LD 1213.

Wildlife management in Maine has a long and storied history and the State has done an excellent job of managing our valuable wildlife resources. Big game species populations and big game hunting are in particularly good shape and we have our skilled biologists to thank for a lot of those species' successes.

Part of wildlife management is collection of data on the animals of interest. Typically, wildlife managers do not handle or examine every animal in a population or that have been harvested. What is typical is studying a sample, that is using a ratio of a population to make management decisions. A major theme in wildlife management is statistics and its use in determining adequate sample sizes that can be used for management with confidence. It is a foundation of modern wildlife management. Some examples of sampling used in current wildlife management in Maine include radio telemetry studies to determine mortality rates for moose calves, capturing and banding wild turkeys to estimate population size through recovery of bands, and examining a portion of the annual white-tailed deer (about one quarter) harvest to collect data such as age and body and antler size as indices of population size and health. Our biologists can use a sample of each of these species as an indicator for the total population they are managing, and it has proven effective. These are just a few examples of effective management that has been done without large samples.

I believe that implementing online or telephonic tagging as an option will be a benefit to the Department. The Department will be able to spend less resources on the current standard of all animals being presented in person at a tagging station. The Department can utilize the wealth of data they already possess to estimate the sample size or number of animals that need to be sampled to provide adequate data for management decisions, and there can be mechanisms put into place to ensure they get the sample needed. Much of the management decisions leading up to the wealth of wildlife resources we have today relied on samples, and I believe at its very least, online, or telephonic tagging will not hinder the successes we have seen in managing our big game animals.

I urge you to support this bill.

Thank you.

Dana Valleau
72 Sherman Road
Liberty, Maine 04949

danaburr67@gmail.com
mobile: (207)215-4582