

**TESTIMONY OF SUSANNA RICHER
IN SUPPORT OF
L.D. 883, "An Act To Protect Endangered Species Whose Life Cycles Include Maine Land or Waters"
Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
May 10, 2021**

Senator Dill, Representative Landry, and distinguished members of the Committee:

Thank you for considering my testimony in support of L.D. 883, "An Act To Protect Endangered Species Whose Life Cycles Include Maine Land or Waters."

In researching this bill, I was dismayed to learn that Maine is one of only a handful of states that does not mirror at the state-level the statutory protection of endangered or threatened species that are listed at a federal level under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. Why is that? It is not as if the Federal government is free and loose with its endangered species designations. For a species to make it on the federal list, means that it is in imminent danger of becoming extinct throughout all or a large part of its native territory.

Of the presently 16 federally-listed threatened and endangered species found in Maine, six are not listed at the state level. The current policy of selective compliance with the federal guidelines is short-sighted and does not consider the long-term benefits of protecting all federally listed species, regardless of if their population numbers are thought to be on the rise or in decline in our state at any given moment. That we are not already systematically cooperating with federal endangered species listings is reckless and irresponsible. As a state that prides itself on wildlife and habitat conservation, we need to do better before it is too late.

As a result, I ask that this committee vote in favor of the preservation of our state's precious wildlife for future generations - vote "Ought to Pass" on L.D. 883, "An Act To Protect Endangered Species Whose Life Cycles Include Maine Land or Waters."

Thank you for your consideration.

Susanna Richer
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