

Christopher Richards
Maine Guide- Hermon
LD 1991

Good Morning Senator Dill, Representative Landry, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, my name is Christopher Richards, I live in Hermon, Maine, and I'm here in my guiding capacity to share my support for LD 1991-or at least some form of electronic game tagging for big game in Maine.

I strongly urge the committee to consider E-Tagging for all, but if that's not something that folks are comfortable approving for all the idea should not be dismissed entirely. Instead, I would urge you to consider rolling out electronic tagging in a series of steps with the first being to allow for the electronic tagging of all big game my Professional Maine Guide's and outfitters.

I have witnessed first-hand the challenges that Maine's tagging requirements can put on its hunters, outfitters, guides and the clients we draw to this great state-especially during the warmer bear and moose seasons.

Many of us, me included, have seen what it can be like to be the 11th moose in a line up sitting at a tagging station waiting for game to be registered. Why wouldn't we change this if we can? Every year there are horror stories of long waits in the pounding sun or of people driving dangerously to race down dirt roads to get to a tagging station before it closes. Or how about the lost revenue opportunities that guides experience with an inability to offer another guiding opportunity to a successful client; such as a guided grouse hunt the morning after a successful afternoon moose hunt- only due to needing to make the trip to the tagging station the next day within certain hours staffed by a respective business or location. This system is an unnecessary challenge that can be addressed through e-tagging.

We must also consider this moral item: If electronic tagging, even in an abbreviated initial first step for guides only, would prevent even just one large game animal from spoiling due to avoiding long waits on a hot August or September day wouldn't that be worth it?

Maine's Guiding & Outfitting community are full of folks of the highest integrity and professionalism and I feel it's safe to say anyone that is able to pass the rigorous guide testing that is required to earn a guide's license in Maine can easily and quickly learn how to collect whatever information is necessary to electronically tag and report an animal.

Many other states, including some which I hunt in, are using electronic tagging very successfully and Maine can as well. This bill should be approved- however if reservations are in place let's take the initial step to approve this for guides and outfitters that want to participate and are able to do so. It's good for outfitters, it's good for hunters and it brings an added assurance of maximum respect for the harvested game of our state.

Please approve some form of electronic tagging.

Thank you for your time.