



Maine Professional Guides Association

55 Morrison Hill Road
Wilton, ME 04294

www.maineguides.org

Testimony Neither for Nor Against LD 163

An Act to Increase Communication Between the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and Lifetime License Holders by Requiring Free License Renewals Under Certain Circumstances February 6, 2023

Senator LaFountain, Representative Landry, and members of the committee, my name is James Cote and I am here today on behalf of the Maine Professional Guides Association neither for nor against LD 163.

We understand that this legislation is born from the need to better understand how many lifetime license holders are actively intending to hunt, fish and trap each year in anticipation of future electronic tagging technologies and programs. The lifetime license program has been an overwhelming success, and we believe it has eliminated a major barrier to hunting, fishing and trapping.

While we appreciate the Department's need to have accurate hunting, fishing and trapping license data, we are also concerned that this requirement could create an unfortunate barrier for lifetime license holders, especially youth and senior sportsmen and women.

At a minimum, we would urge the Department and this committee to consider means of making his requirement as simple as possible for hunters, fishermen, and trappers. This may include exempting youth and seniors from this requirement, which the legislation does not appear to do, as well as phasing in this requirement over a period of seasons so that lifetime license holders can become accustomed to the process and requirements before an effective date where they could be found in violation.

Thank you for your consideration and we would be glad to work with the committee and the Department in advance of the work session to alleviate these concerns.