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LD 814

I would like to register my opposition to LD814. This proposal is not based on any biological necessity, but is based solely on emotion and "feel good" efforts at best, and at worst is an attempt at crippling sound wildlife management efforts. You will hear and read detailed and extensive testimony from former MDIF&W deer biologist Gerald Lavigne also opposing this bill, and you on the committee should pay close attention to his well thought out and expert testimony, which is based on scientific data and his years of first hand experience with deer/coyote interactions. One of the important distinctions that I believe he makes is that the current coyote hunting and trapping policy is directed more towards predator control than sporting harvest. Predator control is more extensive than strictly sporting activities.

There is no question that even with current regulations in place, that the coyote population in Maine is holding its own and is certainly in no danger of extermination. There is no biological reason to impose any restrictions on current harvest methods and times. In fact, the recent antlerless deer permit law approved last year has a section in it that requires the department to encourage additional coyote harvest for the benefit of the deer population in both the winter and during spring fawning. This bill would further restrict coyote harvest in complete opposite of what has been directed in the antlerless deer law.

Again I would urge all members of the committee to vote against this bill, regardless of whether you approve of all the practices and methods currently being used, keeping in mind that this is NOT strictly a sporting issue but that it is a predator control and management issue which often times uses methods and practices that would not be appropriate if it were purely a sporting issue.