

May 4, 2023

Dear Members of the Joint Standing Committee Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

Re: LD 958 An Act to Expand Protections to Maine's Loons from Lead Poisoning by Prohibiting the Sale and Use of Certain Painted Lead Jigs

My name is Richard Dressler and I am writing in support of LD 958. I am a resident of Glenburn and live year around on Pushaw Lake in Penobscot County. I have been coordinator of the annual loon count on Pushaw Lake for the last 15 years.

Lead poisoning in loons is one of the leading causes of death for recovered loon mortalities throughout the state. Pushaw Lake and nearby Little Pushaw Pond support a population of loons which we want to keep healthy and free of lead poisoning. The loons are an important component of the Pushaw Lake ecosystem and are enjoyed by residents and visitors to our area. Our lakes also support a fish population enjoyed by many anglers some of whom may be using painted lead jigs.

A 2013 bill prohibited the sale of small-sized lead sinkers and jigs—but the law only applied to *unpainted* jigs. Painted lead tackle is common and the paint in no way reduces the danger of the lead. In order to keep our loons free of lead LD 958 addresses this loophole.

Please support this legislation to help protect our iconic resident of our lakes throughout Maine

Richard Dressler
Glenburn, Maine