

Written Testimony of Kevin Anderson – Eddington, Maine in Opposition of LD 716 An Act to Restrict the Hunting of Coyotes.

Good Afternoon Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts and distinguished members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee.

My name is Kevin Anderson. I am a native of the state of Maine, a current resident of Eddington, Maine, a registered Maine Guide and a retired Maine Game Warden. I am writing in opposition of LD 716 An Act to Restrict the Hunting of Coyotes.

The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife is responsible for the management of all fish and wildlife in the State of Maine. A job that they have done well and still do very well at. The job of regulating hunting in the State of Maine should be handled by IFW. Any changes to the current hunting laws should be one based upon sound biological data, not emotion and opinion.

The current coyote hunting laws are effective and necessary. There is no biological reason to change the methods, season, and limits on coyotes. They are adaptive and masters of survival and doing very well in all parts of the State of Maine, both urban and rural.

The bill as written seeks to remove coyote night hunting as a legal means to harvest coyote. There is no safety or biological reason to do so. To do that would be to remove one of the most important harvest times for coyote hunters. A tool that is currently used to keep coyote population numbers in check.

Coyotes are not a species of concern, threatened or endangered.

I have actively hunted coyotes at night for approximately 10 years and still do to this day. Night hunting coyotes is the most effective way to harvest coyotes for most hunters.

The harvest of coyotes at night throughout the winter removes predator pressure from other game species, like whitetail deer, when they need it the most and before the onset of fawning season.

I understand and accept that coyotes are here to stay and have a role in the ecosystem, but I also understand from my over 40 years as a hunter and 26 years as a Maine Game Warden, the importance of management techniques that work. The laws the way they are currently written are working and do not need to be changed by others based upon personal agendas and emotions instead of sound biological reasons.

Maine is one of 34 states that allow the hunting of coyotes at night. That is not a coincidence. The hunting of coyotes at night is an essential management tool. If it's not broken, don't fix it.

In closing, this bill goes too far by attempting to shut down coyote night hunting all together and cutting the coyote hunting season nearly in half, while increasing the penalty for those that violate the law for no legitimate reason. Increasing penalties for violations of law is done when current penalties are not working. There is no current problem associated with hunters violating

current coyote hunting laws which means there is no need for enhanced penalties. I ask the committee to vote NO on LD 716 and let the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife manage the wildlife in Maine based upon sound management data.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin M. Anderson