

John Craig
Dedham
LD 716

LD 716, an act to restrict the hunting of coyotes, should not pass. IFW's estimate of the coyote population at 10k to 12k (with bears at 30k), is ridiculously low. It's irresponsible, without a realistic estimate of the actual population, to consider any limitations on existing control measures. This bill isn't the end game for its supporters. They seek a coexistence experiment for the State of Maine, with no harm done to coyotes ever. Existing hunting and trapping maintains a level of respect with these apex predator which have no natural enemies in Maine. Coyote attacks on domestic animals and people are a serious issue in many parts of America where development, with little hunting and trapping, has limited the ability to maintain coyotes fear of people. Google "coyote attack" for many examples. Nahant, MA is a good close example, with residents living in fear for their pets and themselves. The end result is always the same. Coyotes that have lost their fear are removed by killing them. Nahant hired \$\$\$ USDA sharpshooters to do the work of what law abiding hunters and trappers are currently doing in Maine. In 2009 a young lady hiking alone was killed in Nova Scotia, in an area where coyotes had lost fear due to protection in a park. The pack of coyotes killed her in the same fashion they kill a deer. It was determined moose made up the primary diet, after wiping all other smaller game, of coyotes in this area and she didn't appear to be much of a challenge for a hungry pack. We need to maintain our existing control measures, letting the hunters and trappers maintain fear of mankind in the minds of coyotes like sheepdogs protecting a flock. Removing night hunting, one of the most effective hunting methods would result in a rapid population explosion. This experiment, LD 716 supporters wish to force on Maine, won't work and is actually a safety hazard for those who are unaware of the protections hunting and trapping offers each citizen and their domestic animals. Please do not support this bill as an elected official. Sincerely,
John A. Craig, Jr.
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