

Matthew Gilley
Harpowell
LD 716

Good day Senator Baldachi and Representative Roberts, my name is Matthew Gilley and I am a lifelong resident of Harpswell and an avid outdoorsmen. I am writing to you today in strong opposition of LD 716 an act to restrict the hunting of coyotes. Restricting the hunting of coyotes will allow their population to drastically increase while causing harm to the deer and other populations of animals known as coyote prey. Why is the state attempting to restrict the hunting of the animals; when it is the very few people who hunt them that keep the coyote populations at bay. They also provide an additional layer of protection to the deer and other animals known as prey to them. To move the season so it overlaps with Maine's deer hunting season is ludicrous. This will only add to the number of hunters in the woods, while allowing the targeting of different animals leading to the very large potential for hunter conflicts and illegal hunting of both deer and coyote. Why is a body of government, the legislature, trying to dictate and change seasons, why is this not coming from the state's trained biologists who are educated and understand the balance of nature much better than someone in the state house? We have had a large amount of cats and dogs disappear in my town over the last several years with no trace to be found; Harpswell's coyote population has exploded as well in that time frame. I used to kill 2-3 a year when I started hunting them 20 years ago. I've killed 26 so far this winter season; 7 of those had mange. They have no natural predators and as more people have moved to our town and the number of pets has increased as well as the deer population so have their numbers. Hunting is the most effective way of managing coyote or any animal population when done correctly. Maine has done this for years and there is absolutely no evidence or reason to change this. I find it very troubling that my representative (a sponsor of this bill) ran on the fact that she was a hunter and an avid supporter of Maine's hunting heritage. How is restricting hunting being supportive Maine's heritage? Thank you for your time and please vote ought not to pass.