

Janet Lynch
Pownal
LD 1364

TESTIMONY OF JANET LYNCH

In SUPPORT of LD LD 1364 "Resolve: Authorizing a Study on the Impacts and Risks of lead Based Ammunition" Committee of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife

9 April, 2025

Good afternoon Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts, and members of the Committee. My name is Janet Lynch and I am from Pownal.

As a landowner and a Mainer who cares deeply about maintaining healthy ecosystems and limiting impacts to non-target wildlife, I am deeply concerned about the environmental effects of lead poisoning on non-target species and habitats, as well as on the meat from game shot with lead. Given that alternatives are widely available, it is not necessary to use lead, and phasing it out would have significant benefits for human health and the environment. But first it is wise to fully quantify the environmental and health effects of using lead shot.

Lead is toxic to animals and humans, and its use has significant negative environmental impacts. These include the slow deaths of non-target species such as eagles and other birds of prey, mammals. Lead contamination of water bodies results in contamination of fish and poisoning of water fowl such as Maine's iconic loons. In addition to contaminating animals shot with lead and water courses, lead shot also contaminates soils, endangering herbivores and also humans who may forage mushrooms. These are unacceptable and unnecessary risks, given that alternatives are readily available.

Because lead also contaminates the flesh of game shot with lead shot, this is a public health issue, as those eating game taken using lead shot are exposed to lead poisoning. These impacts are serious: studies have shown high levels of lead in maternal blood, breast milk, umbilical blood, and infant blood in rural communities with high levels of maternal traditional game meat intake.

I also note that many land owners are concerned about lead contamination on their land. If landowners are confident that hunters are using safer alternatives, this can lead to more land access for hunters.

A study which clearly indicates and quantifies the scale of the problem, as recommended in this Resolve, is a prudent step in planning for safer hunting for all. Fortunately, alternatives to lead shot are widely available. This bill is necessary so that Mainers can better understand the very serious negative environmental and health impacts of using lead shot, and can work together to minimize these impacts.

The goal of this very sensible Resolve is to better understand the health and environmental effects of lead and ultimately to make hunting more enjoyable and safer for all concerned.

Please vote, LD 1364 "Resolve: Authorizing a Study on the Impacts and Risks of lead Based Ammunition" OUGHT TO PASS.

Sincerely,

Janet Lynch, Pownal