

To the Committee Chair and Members regarding LD 1438:

My name is Emily Beck and I live in Seal Cove on the west side of Mount Desert Island. I am writing to express my strong support for the bill to legalize deer hunting on MDI.

Though I am not myself a hunter or a fan of hunting generally, the deer population on the Island is out of control and needs thinning. Here in Seal Cove there is a herd of nine deer who wander around our property for several hours almost every day. They are impervious to virtually any effort to drive them away, including a manically barking dog. The ticks they carry are an uncontrollable menace. I have had Lyme disease once and will no doubt contract it again since my husband and I regularly find ticks on ourselves despite taking all precautions. The deer have destroyed several fruit trees and trampled garden beds and made our fields their personal latrine. Growing flowers and vegetables is impossible without erecting high barriers to keep them out. My husband enclosed much of the property with an electric fence a couple of years ago at great effort, but it did very little to deter them. We have explored more permanent fencing using mesh or metal but the cost is prohibitive.

As the *Bangor Daily News* and other local media have reported, there have been at least two recent incidents of deer poaching on MDI and one of those was on our property. According to Game Warden Eric Rudolph, who came to our house to investigate last winter, the poacher likely followed a buck up our driveway from Route 102 in the middle of the night, then shot it and cut off the head as a trophy, leaving the body to rot on the ground. Our next-door neighbor apparently heard the shot and alerted the Warden Service. My husband and I not only found the incident gruesome, but personally threatening to know that an intruder was walking around our property using a gun in the dark.

Deer wandering MDI roads at all times of day and night is extremely common and, as a consequence, so are car accidents.

We know of three people in need who are experienced and skilled deer hunters who would benefit immensely from being able to harvest venison. Because of the current legal prohibition, we can't provide them the opportunity to take advantage of our resident herd.

For all these reasons, I urge you to pass LD 1438. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Emily Beck
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