

**TESTIMONY OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE  
BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND  
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE  
IN SUPPORT OF L.D. 1225**

**An Act to Strengthen Maine's Wildlife Laws**

**PRESENTED BY: Senator BURNS of Washington**

**COSPONSORED by Representatives: MARKS of Pittston, SHORT of  
Pittsfield**

**DATE OF HEARING: April 11, 2013**

Good afternoon Senator Dutremble, Representative Shaw and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Jim Connolly Wildlife Division Director at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking in SUPPORT of **L.D. 1225**.

This bill makes several changes in Maine's Wildlife laws that the Department supports. The deletion of rock doves and some other species from the list of migratory game birds makes the Maine statutes consistent with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regulations.

This bill would add bear, moose and wild turkey to the list of species that the Department may regulate the feeding of. Instances of inappropriate feeding of wildlife continue to create nuisance issues and public safety hazards that should be addressed.

The bill will also make the hunting of wild birds consistent with our language on the hunting of big game animals. Currently there is no law prohibiting the hunting of wild birds after having harvested your daily bag limit. A violation is only committed once you have exceeded your daily bag limit or possession limit. The law would also increase the penalty on exceeding the daily bag or possession limit on wild birds. Currently the penalty for exceeding the daily bag or possession limit on wild birds is the same if you are 1 over the limit or 100 over the limit. The new law would assess an additional fine of twenty five dollars per bird in violation of the daily bag or possession limit.

The bill also establishes a Wildlife Importation and Possession Task Force that would create a report to the Committee that would provide direction for dealing with the growing issue of exotic wildlife and the potential introduction of nonnative wildlife. This issue continues to create additional demands on the Department and pose risks to the wildlife and people of Maine. The Department looks forward to working with the Committee to address this issue.

I would be glad to answer any questions at this time or during the work session.