

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND FISHERIES AND
WILDLIFE**

NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST L.D. 1374

**An Act To Allow a Person To Hunt with a Crossbow during the
Archery-only Deer Season**

PRESENTED BY: Senator TUTTLE of York

**COSPONSORED BY: Senators BURNS of Washington, DUTREMBLE of York,
HASKELL of Cumberland, Representatives: CRAFTS of Lisbon, DAVIS of
Sangerville, KUSIAK of Fairfield, SHORT of Pittsfield, WOOD of Sabattus.**

DATE OF HEARING: April 23, 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 **NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST L.D. 1374.**

L.D. 1374 would modify existing law and allow hunting with a crossbow during the archery-only deer season. This bill also removes the requirement for a person hunting with a crossbow under a bear, moose or turkey permit to have a crossbow hunting license.

Currently in order to hunt bear, moose, or turkey a person must have either a firearms hunting license or an archery hunting license along with the appropriate permit. The language in this bill is unclear regarding whether the hunter is still required to have either a firearms hunting license or an archery hunting license along with the appropriate permit. If this bill is passed as written there are several other locations in Title 12 that would need clarification and it could have a negative fiscal impact. From a biological standpoint this change does not increase bag limits for any of the current seasons. However, from a social perspective this bill would increase the number of hunters afield. Increases in the antlerless deer harvest that result from this change should be able to be adjusted for within existing management systems. Based on the experience of other states where the use of a crossbow does not allow a hunter to take a second deer and firearms seasons for deer are lengthy like Maine's we would expect the following to occur if this bill is enacted:

1. Some archery hunters will switch from hand-held bows to crossbows.
2. Some new hunters that have never hunted with hand-held bows will take up crossbow hunting during the October archery season.
3. Crossbows will provide increased hunting method opportunity for hunters as they age. Other state's license sale data clearly show as hunter's age, crossbows become more attractive.

4. The total archery harvest will increase as participation by crossbow hunters increases.

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