

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE**

**BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON
INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE**

IN SUPPORT OF L.D. 121

LD TITLE: An Act To Require the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife To Implement a Firearm Safety and Firearm Violence Prevention Program

SPONSORED BY: Representative FECTEAU of Biddeford

DATE OF HEARING: February 6, 2019

Good morning Senator Dill, Representative Nadeau and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Commissioner Judy Camuso, representing the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife in support of **L.D. 121**.

This bill requires the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to develop and implement a program focused on increasing the awareness and education of the public on matters relating to firearm safety and the prevention of firearm violence.

Current law, 12 MRS §10108 (1) directs the Commissioner to have a firearms safety program. The Department follows the law through our firearms hunter education program. We teach approximately 4000 students, (of varied ages) each year on the safe handling of firearms through our combination of online, classroom, and hands on programs.

The Department feels LD 121 creates a timely opportunity to review what we currently have in law, and how we deliver firearms safety to the public. In our effort to recruit new hunters and reach broader audiences with the message of safe gun handling we look forward to working with Representative Fecteau and this Committee, using this bill to strengthen the programs we currently have in place.

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