

**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. 649**

**An Act To Enhance Collaboration among State Agencies
To Improve Landowner Relations**

SPONSORED BY: Representative COREY of Windham

CO-SPONSORED BY: Senator BREEN of Cumberland, Representatives BRYANT of Windham, FAY of Raymond, KESCHL of Belgrade, MAREAN of Hollis, Nadeau of Winslow, Stearns of Guilford, Senators DIANMOND of Cumberland, DILL of Penobscot

DATE OF HEARING: February 25, 2019

Good morning Senator Dill, Representative Nadeau and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Judy Camuso, Commissioner of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking on behalf of the Department, neither for nor against L.D. 649

This bill directs all state agencies and, in particular the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, the Department of Marine Resources and the Department of Economic and Community Development to collaborate with our Department to implement the Landowner Relations Program. Additionally, the bill directs the Department to organize the collaboration to distribute as evenly as practicable the burden experienced by the various agencies arising from the public use of private lands.

I would like to thank the bill sponsor for the support of the Landowner Relations Program. Although we appreciate the support to the Landowner Program, we cannot fully support the bill at this time. The public use of private land is a critical issue affecting all who recreate in Maine. As the new Commissioner, I would like time to consider all options, by reviewing the Maine Land Conservation Task Force recommendations, consult with the Landowner and Sportsmen Advisory Board, and speak with Governor Mills regarding the future for the Department's Landowner Relations Program. I believe a full review of program priorities will better inform the next steps. The Department has a very effective program now and I look forward to making it even stronger!

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