

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

In Support of L.D. 708

**“AN ACT TO EXPAND MAINE’S MOOSE LOTTERY TO BENEFIT
WOUNDED SERVICE MEMBERS AND VETERANS”**

SPONSORED BY: President JACKSON of Aroostook

CO-SPONSORED BY: Representative MARTIN of Eagle Lake

DATE OF HEARING: February 27, 2019

Good morning Senator Dill, Representative Nadeau and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Bill Swan, Director of Licensing and Registration at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking on behalf of the Department, in support of **L.D. 708**.

Essentially **L.D. 708** seeks to put more moose permits into the hands of disabled veterans. The Department is supportive of this concept, but it has several items that it would like the Committee to consider if it chooses to move forward with this bill. The Department has met with the Bureau of Veteran Services to discuss this proposed legislation. First, both the Bureau and the Department would propose that the eligibility criteria for a disabled veteran be 50% service connected. This would make it the same as the eligibility requirements for a disabled veterans fishing/hunting license as well as for the controlled moose hunt. This would greatly simplify the process of determining eligibility for this benefit. Second, the Department would propose that the desired result could be achieved by simply allowing the transfer of a moose permit to an eligible disabled veteran. Both the Bureau and the Department would make every effort to make moose permit winners aware of the new option to transfer their permit to a disabled veteran. We would do this on our websites as well as in our letter to moose permit winners. We would encourage veteran organizations to do the same. We would also propose that disabled veterans could sign up for this opportunity at the same time that they apply for the current controlled moose hunt lottery. The same lottery process used to determine controlled moose hunt permit winners would be used to determine the order that disabled veterans would be eligible to have a moose permit transferred to them from a regular moose permit winner from the regular lottery. This proposed process would minimize the additional administrative burden to both the Bureau and the Department and would provide a straight forward way to achieve the desired result of this proposed legislation.

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