

**TESTIMONY OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE  
BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND  
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE  
IN OPPOSITION TO L.D. 924**

**“An Act To Remove the Background Check Requirement for Maine Guides Who  
Are at Least 70 Years of Age and Hold a Lifetime Hunting or Fishing License”**

**SPONSORED BY: Representative MARTIN of Greene**

CO-SPONSORED BY: Representative JOHANSEN of Monticello  
Representative MARTIN of Eagle Lake  
Representative PERKINS of Oakland  
Representative THERIAULT of China  
Senator DAVIS of Piscataquis  
Senator DILL of Penobscot

**DATE OF HEARING: Monday, March 11, 2019**

Good morning Senator Dill, Representative Nadeau and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Joel Wilkinson, Colonel of the Warden Service at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking on behalf of the Department, in opposition to **L.D. 924**.

This bill would exempt a registered Maine guide who holds a senior lifetime hunting, fishing, trapping or archery license from the requirement to undergo a background check when renewing the guide license if the guide has undergone a background check when the guide was 68 years of age or older.

The background check requirement was enacted to prevent persons from becoming guides or having their current guides license revoked if they committed a crime punishable by imprisonment for a term of one year or more. (Felony level crimes)

Currently, Maine Guides must renew their guides license and background check every five years. The proposed bill would remove the background check for guides 70 years of age or older.

There is a provision in the current statute to require a holder of a guide license to notify the department of a conviction that is grounds for revocation within 30 days of the conviction. It is possible that a guide who commits a felony level crime would not self-report the conviction to the department. This conviction would be discovered while undergoing a renewed background check.

Persons over the age of 68 are not immune from committing crimes. The proposed bill could create a situation where a licensed guide over the age of 68 commits a felony level crime against a person, and could continue to guide, if they failed to self-report the conviction.

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