

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

In Opposition To L.D. 996

**“An Act To Establish a Special Handgun Hunting Season That
Coincides with the Muzzle-loading Open Season on Deer”**

SPONSORED BY: Senator GUERIN of Penobscot.

DATE OF HEARING: March 11, 2019

Good morning Senator Dill, Representative Nadeau and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Tim Peabody, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking on behalf of the Department, in opposition to **L.D. 996**.

This bill establishes a special handgun open season on deer that coincides with the special muzzle-loading season.

The muzzle-loading season is a long-standing season dedicated to hunters who utilize a muzzle-loader rather than a traditional rifle or a shotgun for deer hunting. Nothing prevents a hunter from utilizing a handgun during the regular firearms season on deer and in fact a hunter can utilize a muzzle-loader pistol or revolver that meets the definition of a muzzle-loader during the special muzzle-loading season.

This bill adds another permit that charges \$1 for a hunter to be able to hunt during this season with a handgun. The Department has stressed the need to simplify our hunting laws and has urged the Committee to carefully consider supporting law proposals that simplify, not add to the complexity of current law. We feel that this bill proposal offers opportunity for a small segment of users during a short window of time and adds unnecessary layers to the hunting laws which is why we are opposing this bill.

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