

In Support of LD 1265: An Act to Control the Means of Killing Coyotes

Date

Greetings Senator (or Representative).....

As one of your constituents and a citizen of Maine, I wish to write to you regarding the treatment of Maine's Coyotes.

Human health is inextricably tied to the health of animals and the environment.

And it has become quite obvious that our human behavior toward wildlife and our actions toward the land are the underlying cause of disease. One behavior in particular is of great concern: the year round killing of our Coyotes, an important Keystone carnivore here in Maine. Of grave concern is not only the year round killing, but the violent manner in which this happens.

Keystone carnivores play an important role in protecting other wildlife and humans from disease. Our Coyotes play a vital role in controlling wildlife populations through the complexity of predator-prey relations. Coyotes can have a powerful effect in controlling small carnivores like foxes, raccoons and skunks, and therefore protect them from spreading rabies disease amongst them. They can control fox populations by means of *territory*...wherever Coyotes are, foxes are not. And Coyotes hunt raccoons and skunks as their prey, thus keeping their numbers in check.

Many of our Maine people suffer from Lyme disease, which has become an epidemic. This too is an expression of the imbalance in the natural system. This disease has become an epidemic because of the overpopulation of our deer on whose bodies adult ticks breed, and proliferation of white footed mice, who carry the bacterium and then infect the ticks that bite them. Our Coyotes have the ability to balance out the populations of these two species, and stamping out this epidemic, but only if we let them. In the meantime....our people and our children are suffering.

In addition, more and more people in Maine are conferring with each other regarding the infringements of their private property rights due to this year round, unabashed killing of coyotes...day and night! The insidious practice of sending hounds after terrified coyotes, who are trained to then attack and kill them, goes on all year long, despite the landowners vigorously objecting to it. Land owners who always welcomed our traditional hunters on their land, now are posting because of these sinister and violent activities.

So many of our Maine farmers have come to understand the value of coexisting with the carnivores who live on their farm. They realize that their farm needs them to keep the land balanced and healthy. But when the lives of coyotes are constantly being thrown into chaos due to the year round killing, conflict can arise with our farmers. Moreover, our farmers often keep their livestock out to graze at night in distant pastures, along with their guardian dogs, and are at great risk to be killed and/or are terrified by these activities. In addition, a bill was passed to make silencers on guns legal. Thus this gives free rein to killing at night....anywhere.

So why do our Laws allow the **YEAR ROUND KILLING** of this important carnivore, who not only protect wildlife from disease, but also ourselves?

So as your constituent I am asking that you support bill [LD 1265: An Act to Control the Means of Killing Coyotes](#), sponsored by Senator David Miramant. This bill will make it illegal to use hunting dogs to chase our Maine Coyotes to exhaustion and then kill them; it will make it illegal to bait Coyotes with the flesh of dead animals to draw them from their refuge and then shoot them; it will make it illegal to kill Coyotes at night

It is time!

I would encourage you to learn more about Coyote's value by visiting the educational website created for the people of Maine by Maine carnivore biologist Geri Vistein:

www.CoyoteLivesinMaine.org

Respectfully,