

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 1343

S.P. 559

In Senate, April 1, 2025

An Act to Protect the Right to Harvest Wildlife

Received by the Secretary of the Senate on March 28, 2025. Referred to the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D M Grant", is positioned above the printed name of the Secretary of the Senate.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator HICKMAN of Kennebec.

Cosponsored by Representative FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor and

Senators: BALDACCI of Penobscot, HARRINGTON of York, STEWART of Aroostook,
Representatives: DILL of Old Town, FREDERICKS of Sanford, HASENFUS of Readfield,
ROBERTS of South Berwick, WOOD of Greene.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §6001, sub-§18-A** is enacted to read:

3 **18-A. Harvest, the verb.** The verb "harvest" means:

4 A. To gather, forage, catch, trap, hunt, fish, take or kill for human consumption,
5 nourishment, sustenance, bodily health or well-being, as declared in the Constitution
6 of Maine, Article I, Section 25; or

7 B. To catch, trap, hunt, fish, take or kill for sport, wildlife management or population
8 control.

9 **Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §10001, sub-§29-A** is enacted to read:

10 **29-A. Harvest, the verb.** The verb "harvest" means:

11 A. To gather, forage, catch, trap, hunt, fish, take or kill for human consumption,
12 nourishment, sustenance, bodily health or well-being, as declared in the Constitution
13 of Maine, Article I, Section 25; or

14 B. To catch, trap, hunt, fish, take or kill for sport, wildlife management or population
15 control.

16 **Sec. 3. 12 MRSA §10050** is enacted to read:

17 **§10050. Right to harvest wildlife**

18 The Legislature recognizes that the harvesting of wildlife by hunting, fishing or
19 trapping is a valued part of the cultural heritage of this State. The Legislature further
20 recognizes that such activities perform an essential role in the State's economy and in
21 funding the State's management programs for game and nongame species alike and that
22 such activities have also come to perform an important and sometimes critical role in the
23 biological management of certain natural communities within this State.

24 In recognition of this cultural heritage and the tradition of stewardship it embodies; in
25 recognition of the important role that the harvesting of wildlife by hunting, fishing or
26 trapping perform in this State's economy and in the preservation and management of the
27 State's natural communities; and pursuant to the right to food as declared in the Constitution
28 of Maine, Article I, Section 25, the Legislature declares that the people of this State have
29 the right to harvest wildlife by hunting, fishing or trapping, subject to the applicable laws,
30 rules and regulations authorized pursuant to this Title, which the department shall
31 vigorously enforce.

32 **SUMMARY**

33 This bill defines the verb "harvest" for the marine resources laws and the inland
34 fisheries and wildlife laws. The bill provides that the people of this State have the right to
35 harvest wildlife by hunting, fishing or trapping, subject to applicable laws, rules and
36 regulations.