

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

## SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2026

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Legislative Document

No. 2217

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S.P. 904

In Senate, February 24, 2026

### An Act Related to the Electronic Tagging of Deer

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Reported by Senator BALDACCI of Penobscot for the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife pursuant to Resolve 2025, chapter 32, section 1.

Reference to the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife suggested and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 218.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT  
Secretary of the Senate

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

2 **Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §10264, 2nd ¶**, as amended by PL 2023, c. 593, §1, is further  
3 amended to read:

4 ~~Notwithstanding section 10801, subsection 4, \$2 of each deer registration fee collected~~  
5 ~~under section 12301-A, subsection 3, paragraph C must be deposited in the fund and may~~  
6 ~~be used to assist landowners with the prevention or management of landowner deer~~  
7 ~~conflicts. In addition, the~~ The revenue from each antlerless deer permit fee collected under  
8 section 11152, subsection 9, minus administrative costs, must be deposited in the fund and  
9 be used for predator control purposes or to acquire or manage deer habitat. The  
10 commissioner may accept and deposit into the fund monetary gifts, donations or other  
11 contributions from public or private sources for the purposes specified in this section. The  
12 fund must be held separate and apart from all other money, funds and accounts. The  
13 department shall report annually to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having  
14 jurisdiction over inland fisheries and wildlife matters on the fund and its utilization.

15 **Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §11502, sub-§2**, as amended by PL 2003 c. 655, Pt. B, §173 and  
16 affected by §422, is further amended to read:

17 **2. Tagging.** Prior to presenting a deer for registration under this section or pursuant  
18 to section 12301-C, a person may not possess or leave in the field or forest a deer killed by  
19 that person unless the deer has securely attached to it a plainly visible tag that conforms to  
20 the requirements established under this section.

21 **Sec. 3. 12 MRSA §12301-A, sub-§3**, as amended by PL 2013, c. 387, §§4 to 6, is  
22 further amended to read:

23 **3. Agent duties.** Registration agents shall:

24 A. Register every bear, deer, moose or wild turkey legally presented for registration;  
25 and

26 B. Attach a seal to each bear, deer, moose or wild turkey in the manner directed and  
27 with the materials furnished by the commissioner;

28 ~~C. Collect \$5 and retain \$2 for each seal from the person registering a bear, deer or~~  
29 ~~moose. The remaining \$3 must be returned to the department by the agent pursuant to~~  
30 ~~section 10801, subsection 3; and~~

31 ~~D. Collect and retain \$2 for each wild turkey registered.~~

32 **Sec. 4. 12 MRSA §12301-C** is enacted to read:

33 **§12301-C. Electronic registration of deer**

34 Beginning in 2027, the department shall allow electronic registration of deer. The  
35 commissioner shall adopt rules to implement this section. The rules may include exceptions  
36 to or electronic means of compliance with any of the requirements of this chapter for a  
37 person who registers a deer in accordance with the rules. Rules adopted pursuant to this  
38 section are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

39 **Sec. 5. 12 MRSA §12302-A, sub-§1**, as amended by PL 2021, c. 704, §2, is further  
40 amended to read:

1           **1. Requirement.** Except as provided in section 12307 or rules adopted under ~~section~~  
2 sections 12301-B and 12301-C, a person who kills a bear, deer, moose or wild turkey shall:

3           A. Remain with that animal until it is registered, except as provided in section  
4 12303-A;

5           B. Present that animal for registration in that person's name at the first open registration  
6 station for that animal on the route taken by that person; and

7           C. Leave the registration seal attached to the animal in accordance with section  
8 12301-A until that animal is processed and packaged for consumption.

9           **Sec. 6. 12 MRSA §12303-A, sub-§1**, as repealed and replaced by PL 2021, c. 704,  
10 §3, is amended to read:

11           **1. Time limits.** Except as provided in subsection 1-A and in section 12307 or in rules  
12 adopted under ~~section~~ sections 12301-B and 12301-C, a person may not keep any of the  
13 following unregistered wild animals for more than 18 hours:

14           A. Bear;

15           B. Deer;

16           C. Moose; or

17           D. Wild turkey.

18           **Sec. 7. 12 MRSA §12304-B, sub-§2**, as enacted by PL 2021, c. 54, §13, is amended  
19 to read:

20           **2. Bear, deer and moose.** ~~A~~ Except as provided in rules adopted under section  
21 12301-C, a person ~~must~~ shall present a bear, deer or moose for registration as follows.

22           A. A person shall present a bear, deer or moose in its entirety, including, but not limited  
23 to, all edible meat and the head for registration, except that the viscera, hide, lower legs  
24 and rib cage, including the ribs, spine and pelvis, are not required to be presented for  
25 registration.

26           B. A bear, deer or moose may be dismembered for ease of transportation.

27           C. A person shall present evidence of the sex of a bear, deer or moose for registration.

28           **Sec. 8. 12 MRSA §12306, sub-§1**, as amended by PL 2021, c. 704, §6, is further  
29 amended to read:

30           **1. Prohibition.** Except as provided in section 12307, a person may not possess any of  
31 the following animals if that animal has not been legally registered as provided in this  
32 chapter or rules adopted under ~~section~~ sections 12301-B and 12301-C, unless that animal  
33 is possessed in accordance with chapter 921:

34           A. Bear;

35           B. Deer;

36           C. Moose; or

37           D. Wild turkey.

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## **SUMMARY**

This bill is reported out by the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife pursuant to Resolve 2025, chapter 32. The bill directs the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, beginning in 2027, to allow for the electronic registration of deer. The bill also removes seal fees for the registration of bear, deer, moose and wild turkey.