

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST REGULAR SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND TENTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1007

H. P. 841

House of Representatives, February 25, 1981

Referred to the Committee on Fisheries and Wildlife. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Representative Day of Westbrook.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-ONE

**AN ACT to Permit the Establishment of a One-week Hunting Season for Antlered Deer only.**

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

12 MRSA § 7457, sub-§ 1, ¶ H is enacted to read:

**H. The commissioner may, during the open season on deer, and for up to 6 days, limit hunting so that only antlered deer may be taken, if he determines the action to be in the best interest of game management.**

STATEMENT OF FACT

The purpose of this bill is to permit the commissioner to limit up to 6 days of the open season to hunting for antlered deer only. In 1980 the deer hunting season in Oxford County was curtailed substantially as a conservation measure. If the hunting had been restricted to antlered deer only to reduce the harvest of deer, the so-called "buck law" might have served the purpose. As it was, people who normally hunted that area, particularly residents, were given the choice of not hunting or going to unfamiliar open areas at extra expense.

The State uses length limit in fish as a conservation or management tool. Fishing is permitted, but with restrictions, such that the sport can be enjoyed during the full season. A "buck law" is a similar conservation or management

tool which help preclude the closing of any portion of a sporting season and any portion of the State to deer hunting.

It is conceivable, given the wrong combination of weather during consecutive deer seasons and succeeding winters, that more widespread, shortened, all-deer seasons would be adviseable. This would result in more people being forced to hunt away from home territory, more businesses in those areas catering to the hunting trade having their business curtailed, and would impose greater scheduling problems on employers to allow employees to get time off for a shortened local or area season.