

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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116th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1993

Legislative Document

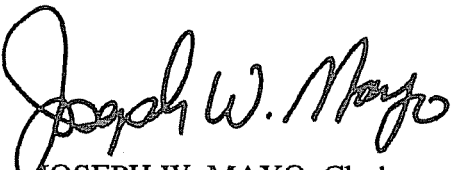
No. 1269

H.P. 940

House of Representatives, April 15, 1993

**An Act Authorizing the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
to Establish Open and Closed Seasons on the Hunting of Deer.**

Submitted by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife pursuant to Joint Rule 24.
Reference to the Committee on Fisheries and Wildlife suggested and ordered printed.


JOSEPH W. MAYO, Clerk

Presented by Representative GREENLAW of Standish.
Cosponsored by Representative: HEINO of Boothbay.

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

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4 Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §7457, sub-§1, ¶A, as amended by PL 1991, c.
170, is further amended to read:

6 A. Except as otherwise provided in this section or by rule
8 adopted by the commissioner pursuant to this section, there
10 is an open season on deer in each calendar year in all
12 counties of the State from the 5th Monday preceding
14 Thanksgiving to ~~November--30th~~ the first Saturday in
16 December. ~~In--any--year--when--November--30th--falls--on--a~~
18 Wednesday,--Thursday--or--Friday,--the--commissioner--may,--by
20 rule,--extend--the--open--season--on--deer--to--the--first--Saturday
22 in--December.--In--any--year--in--which--the--commissioner--extends
24 the--season--beyond--November--30th,--the--commissioner--shall--by
26 rule--open--the--season--in--the--northern--portion--of--the--State--a
28 week--before--opening--the--season--in--the--southern--portion--of
30 the--State.--The--commissioner--may--by--rule--establish--for--this
32 purpose--a--northern--and--a--southern--zone.

34 Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §7457, sub-§1, ¶I is enacted to read:

36 I. The commissioner may lengthen the open season on deer in
38 any part of the State to maintain deer populations in
40 balance with available habitat, subject to the following.

42 (1) The demarcation of each area must follow
44 recognizable physical boundaries, such as rivers, roads
46 and railroad rights-of-way.

48 (2) The determination of these areas must be made and
50 published prior to August 1st of each year.

52 (3) The commissioner may implement a permit system to
54 regulate hunter participation in the lengthened open
56 season and the number, sex and age of deer harvested.

58 (4) Special hunts must take place between the close of
60 the special muzzle-loading season and January 31st.

62 (5) The commissioner may establish limits on deer
64 harvested during the lengthened open season.

66 (6) The commissioner may specify types of weapons to
68 be used during the lengthened open season.

70 (7) The commissioner may adopt rules necessary for the
72 administration, implementation, enforcement and
74 interpretation of this paragraph.

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STATEMENT OF FACT

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This bill removes the framework for setting the deer hunting season that is now in the laws and gives the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife the flexibility needed to establish deer hunting seasons that maximize hunting opportunity and ensure the welfare of the resource.

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The bill also gives the commissioner the authority to regulate deer populations in problem areas, including islands, where the herd is not, or can not, be controlled under the existing system by establishing special hunts to remove deer on a quota basis during early winter.

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