

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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127th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2015

Legislative Document

No. 801

H.P. 550

House of Representatives, March 10, 2015

An Act To Ensure Safe and Humane Bear Hunting Practices

Reference to the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife suggested and ordered printed.

Robert B. Hunt
ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative BATES of Westbrook.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §11228, sub-§1**, as enacted by PL 2011, c. 432, §2, is amended
3 to read:

4 **1. Collar required.** A person may not hunt with a dog in pursuit of ~~bear~~, coyote or
5 bobcat unless the dog has a collar that legibly provides the name, telephone number and
6 address of the owner of that dog.

7 A. A person who violates this subsection commits a civil violation for which a fine
8 of not less than \$100 or more than \$500 may be adjudged.

9 B. A person who violates this subsection after having been adjudicated as having
10 committed 3 or more civil violations under this Part within the previous 5-year period
11 commits a Class E crime.

12 **Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §11251, sub-§1, ¶B**, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2
13 and affected by c. 614, §9, is repealed.

14 **Sec. 3. 12 MRSA §11302**, as amended by PL 2013, c. 280, §7, is repealed.

15 **Sec. 4. 12 MRSA §11302-A** is enacted to read:

16 **§11302-A. Hunting bear with dogs**

17 **1. Prohibition.** A person may not hunt bear with the use of one or more dogs.

18 **2. Exception.** The commissioner or the commissioner's agent may hunt bear with
19 the use of one or more dogs for public safety or research purposes.

20 **3. Penalties.** The following penalties apply to violations of this section.

21 **A.** A person who violates this section commits a Class D crime.

22 **B.** A person who violates this section and, at the time of the offense, has 2 or more
23 prior convictions for violating this section commits a Class C crime.

24 **Sec. 5. 12 MRSA §11303, sub-§2**, as affected by PL 2003, c. 614, §9; repealed
25 and replaced by c. 655, Pt. B, §160; and affected by §422, is amended to read:

26 **2. Prohibition.** A person may not within the area described in subsection 1:

27 A. Hunt bear;

28 B. Trap bear; or

29 C. Molest or harass a bear; ~~or~~

30 ~~D. Release dogs for the purpose of hunting a bear.~~

31 The commissioner, or the commissioner's agent, is exempt from this prohibition for the
32 purpose of live-trapping nuisance bears.

1 **Sec. 6. 12 MRSA §11304**, as affected by PL 2003, c. 614, §9; amended by c. 655,
2 Pt. B, §161; and affected by §422, is repealed.

3 **SUMMARY**

4 This bill prohibits a person from hunting bear with the use of dogs. The bill also
5 makes a violation of that prohibition a Class D crime and a Class C crime for a 3rd or
6 subsequent offense. It provides an exemption for the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries
7 and Wildlife to hunt bear with the use of dogs for public safety or research purposes.