

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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128th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2017

Legislative Document

No. 1020

H.P. 722

House of Representatives, March 14, 2017

**An Act To Minimize Crop Damage by Deer by Amending Certain
Laws Governing Hunting**

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

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative BLACK of Wilton.
Cosponsored by Senator SAVIELLO of Franklin and
Representatives: ACKLEY of Monmouth, DUNPHY of Old Town, HANLEY of Pittston,
HILLIARD of Belgrade, KINNEY of Knox, MASON of Lisbon, SKOLFIELD of Weld,
TIMBERLAKE of Turner.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §11402, sub-§4**, as affected by PL 2003, c. 614, §9 and
3 amended by c. 655, Pt. B, §169 and affected by §422, is further amended to read:

4 **4. Rule.** The commissioner by rule ~~may~~ shall:

5 A. Open any of the areas closed to deer hunting under subsection 3, as long as the
6 legislative body of each affected town approves the opening and imposes reasonable
7 restrictions on hunting in that area. For purposes of this subsection, "affected town"
8 means a town, township or municipality that contains within its borders any area
9 proposed to be opened under this paragraph;

10 B. Create special hunting seasons and zones for the taking of deer in any part of the
11 State to maintain deer populations in balance with available habitat; and to minimize
12 crop or property damage subject to the provisions of this paragraph.

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

15 (3) The commissioner may establish limits on the number of deer taken or
16 possessed by persons during a special season. Limits established by the
17 commissioner under this subparagraph are exceptions to the limits imposed under
18 section 11501.

19 (4) The commissioner may specify types of weapons to be used during a special
20 season; and

21 C. Establish a youth deer hunting day.

22 Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5,
23 chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

24 **SUMMARY**

25 Current law allows the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to open to deer
26 hunting certain coastal and island communities currently closed to hunting, subject to
27 local approval, and to establish a youth deer hunting day. This bill requires the
28 commissioner to open these communities to deer hunting as long as local restrictions are
29 imposed. It requires, while current law permits, the commissioner to create special
30 hunting seasons to control deer populations. It requires the commissioner to create
31 special zones for deer hunting. It allows special hunting seasons and special zones to be
32 created to minimize crop or property damage. It also requires the commissioner to
33 establish a youth deer hunting day.