

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2023

Legislative Document

No. 261

H.P. 166

House of Representatives, January 26, 2023

An Act to Reinstate a Minimum Age for Hunting

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


ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative STROUT of Harrington. (BY REQUEST)

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

2 **Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §11102-A** is enacted to read:

3 **§11102-A. Minimum age for obtaining hunting license**

4 A person who has not attained 5 years of age is ineligible to obtain a hunting license.

5 **Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §11106, sub-§1, ¶B**, as amended by PL 2015, c. 136, §3 and
6 affected by §12, is further amended to read:

7 B. A resident or nonresident 5 years of age or older and under 16 years of age may
8 hunt with bow and arrow if that person holds a valid junior hunting license.

9 **Sec. 3. 12 MRSA §11108, sub-§1**, as repealed and replaced by PL 2015, c. 494,
10 Pt. A, §6, is amended to read:

11 **1. On certain land.** Notwithstanding section 11109, subsection 1 as it applies to this
12 subchapter, and subject to all other applicable laws and rules, a resident 5 years of age or
13 older and a member of the resident's immediate family 5 years of age or older, as long as
14 the hunter's license to hunt is not under suspension or revocation, may hunt without a
15 license, including, but not limited to, an archery hunting license, a crossbow permit and a
16 muzzle-loading permit, on a single plot of land:

- 17 A. To which they are legally entitled to possession;
- 18 B. On which they are actually domiciled;
- 19 C. That is used exclusively for agricultural purposes; and
- 20 D. That is in excess of 10 acres.

21 **Sec. 4. 12 MRSA §11108-C, sub-§2**, as amended by PL 2019, c. 639, §6, is further
22 amended to read:

23 **2. Junior hunter eligibility.** A resident or nonresident who is 5 years of age or older
24 and under 16 years of age may obtain a junior hunting license, which allows that person to
25 hunt subject to the conditions set out in this section.

26 **Sec. 5. 12 MRSA §11108-C, sub-§3**, as amended by PL 2019, c. 639, §6, is further
27 amended to read:

28 **3. Junior hunter supervisor required.** A hunter who is ~~at least~~ 10 years of age or
29 older and under 16 years of age may not hunt unless that person holds a junior hunting
30 license and is in the presence of and under the effective control of a junior hunter
31 supervisor. A hunter who is 5 years of age or older and under 10 years of age may not hunt
32 unless that person holds a junior hunting license and is in the presence of and under the
33 effective control of a junior hunter supervisor who remains at all times within 20 feet of
34 that hunter.

35 **Sec. 6. 12 MRSA §11109, sub-§3, ¶A**, as amended by PL 2017, c. 164, §8, is
36 further amended to read:

37 A. A resident junior hunting license, for a person 5 years of age or older and under 16
38 years of age, is \$8 and permits hunting of all legal species, subject to the permit
39 requirements in subchapter 3. Notwithstanding the permit fees established in
40 subchapter 3, a resident junior hunting license includes all permits, stamps and other

1 permissions needed to hunt at no additional cost. A license holder under this paragraph
2 who qualifies to hunt during the special season on deer under section 11153 and who
3 meets the eligibility requirements of section 11106 must have included in that person's
4 license one antlerless deer permit and one either-sex permit. A resident junior hunting
5 license does not exempt the holder of the license from lottery-related application
6 requirements under this Part.

7 **Sec. 7. 12 MRSA §11109, sub-§3, ¶F**, as amended by PL 2019, c. 501, §8, is
8 further amended to read:

9 F. A nonresident junior hunting license, for a person 5 years of age or older and under
10 16 years of age, is \$35 and permits hunting of all legal species, subject to the permit
11 requirements in subchapter 3. Notwithstanding the permit fees established in
12 subchapter 3, a nonresident junior hunting license includes all permits, stamps and
13 other permissions needed to hunt at no additional cost. A license holder under this
14 paragraph who qualifies to hunt during the special season on deer under section 11153
15 and who meets the eligibility requirements of section 11106 must have included in that
16 person's license one antlerless deer permit and one either-sex permit. A nonresident
17 junior hunting license does not exempt the holder of the license from lottery-related
18 application requirements under this Part.

19 **Sec. 8. 12 MRSA §11154, sub-§13**, as amended by PL 2015, c. 136, §11 and
20 affected by §12, is further amended to read:

21 **13. Hunting adventure permits for children.** Notwithstanding subsection 6 and
22 section 11102-A, the commissioner may issue 2 moose permits to a nonprofit organization
23 dedicated to providing hunting and fishing adventures to children under 21 years of age
24 with life-threatening, critical or terminal illnesses. The commissioner may issue these
25 permits upon written request by an eligible nonprofit organization but may not issue more
26 than 2 permits in total for a calendar year. These permits are in addition to the moose
27 hunting permits issued under subsection 2 for each wildlife management district and are at
28 no cost to the organization.

29 **SUMMARY**

30 This bill sets a minimum age of 5 years of age to hunt most game in Maine with an
31 exception for hunting adventure permits for children. This bill does not alter the minimum
32 age to hunt moose in Maine.