

**Opposition to Majority Report on L.D. 2054
 “An Act to Clarify the Laws Regarding Moose Hunting Permits for
 Hunting Outfitters”**

Number	Author of Letter
I.	Letter from the owners of 21 Sporting Camps in Maine, including 10 members of the MSCA. Four are elected to the MSCA’s nine-member board of directors.
II.	Letter from R. Danny Martin, former IF&W Commissioner, member of the Legislature, and the IF&W Committee.
III.	Letter from The Aroostook Partnership a unique private/public consortium of over 65 businesses, the Northern Maine Development Commission, County higher education institutions, and several regional non-profit organizations. Its mission is to ensure the economic strength, growth, and resilience of Aroostook County.
IV.	Letter from Safari Club International New England Foundation a National Hunter organization.
V.	Letter from the Greater East Grand Economic Council representing the community of Northern Washington County.

Letter from Lodges in Opposition to All Department Amendments to L.D. 2054

March 9, 2026

Dear Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife,

Thank you for your hard work on L.D. 2054. Our industry recognizes this has been a tough issue to navigate and we appreciate all the effort.

The undersigned lodge owners are writing to oppose all the Department amendments, including another one we hear is being dropped today for “An Act to Clarify the Laws Regarding Moose Hunting Permits for Hunting Outfitters”.

Specifically, we oppose the amended language because,

- The amendment oversteps the bill’s purpose and should undergo a public hearing.
- It changes Department Policy without adequate review and was introduced too late for proper consideration.
- Rather than clarifying, the amendment introduces ambiguity and contradicts current law and established practices.
- Legislating against cooperation among Maine’s small businesses, including guides, lodges, and outfitters, is poor policy.
- This puts many lodges in less-moose dense WMDs at a disadvantage.
- The proposal would reduce the rural economic benefits and permit value. (See attached letter from Aroostook Partnership.)

Lastly, we suggest sending a letter to the Department directing them to not make any changes to the program, including changes outlined in the Department Memo dated December 15, 2025, until these matters can be resolved among interested parties.

Signed:

Lodge Owners and Maine Sporting Camp Association (MSCA) Board Members and MSCA Regular Members:

Joshua Busque, Owner, Boulet Sporting Camp, Millinocket, Maine, MSCA Member,
Donald Beaulier, Owner, Baker Lake Camps, NMW, MSCA Member
Jesse Derr, President, Boggy Brook Outfitters, Ellsworth, Maine; MSCA Member
Brett Gerrish, Owner, North Country Lodge, Patten, Maine, MSCA Member

Ron Greco, President, Maine River Lodge, Springfield, Maine; Director, MSCA
Wade Kelly, Owner, Tylor Kelly Camps, Allagash, Maine; MSCA Member
Tyler Philbrick, Owner, Bald Mountain Camps, Oquossoc, Maine, Director MSCA
Alan Theriault, Vice-President, Eagle Lake Sporting Camps, T16R6, Clerk MSCA
Gloria Theriault, President, Eagle Lake Sporting Camps, T16 R6, Director MSCA
Nathan Theriault, President, Eagle Lake Inn, Eagle Lake, Maine, Director MSCA
Daniel Wood, Owner, Kingsbury Lodge, Sabattus, Maine MSCA Member

Lodge Owners:

Craig Corsi, Owner, Grove Hill Outfitters, Brownville, Maine
Dana Daggett, Owner, Hewes Brook Lodge, Fort Fairfield, Maine
Curt Enck, Owner, Northern Hideaway, North Maine Woods,
Corey Lord, Owner, Grand Lake Hunt & Blues Wilderness, Danforth, Maine
Andre Morin, Owner, Katahdin Shadow Lodge, Linneus, Maine
Ronald Ricciardi, Owner, North Maine Woods Guide Service, Eagle Lake, Maine

Roland Danny Martin
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March 14, 2026

RE: LD 2054

Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts and members of the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, my name is R. Danny Martin. I am a former Legislator and member of this Committee. And former Commissioner of IF&W.

As a Legislator, I was involved in discussions about Lodge permits and swapping legislation. The laws passed were inclusive and encouraged by lodges and guides throughout the vast North Maine Woods and rural parts of Maine to cooperate and benefit while putting Maine on the map as a world-class destination for Moose hunts. The Law was not written to prohibit businesses from working together or restrict business practices which benefit hunters, such as swapping.

The Department Amendment will lead to a contrary and negative outcome.

Also, restrictions on swapping were overturned during a recent session because the Legislature saw no good reason to impose them.

I oppose the Department's March 4, 2026 amendment to LD 2054 regarding lodge permits for outfitters. The amendment should be subject to a new public hearing, even a new bill. It imposes needless restrictions on the program with unclear benefits for the hunting and tourism industry or the economy. Only negatives in my view. Thank You.

Best,



R. Danny Martin
Former IFW Commissioner
Former Legislator



Dear Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife,

My name is Kiersten S. Purington and I am the President & CEO of the Aroostook Partnership in Caribou, ME. The Aroostook Partnership is a unique private/public consortium of over 65 businesses, the Northern Maine Development Commission, County higher education institutions, and several regional non-profit organizations. Our mission is to ensure the economic strength, growth, and resiliency of Aroostook County.

On behalf of the Aroostook Partnership, I am writing to express concern about the passage of modified language in Committee for **LD 2054 Amendment Proposed on 04 Mar 2026 for “An Act to Clarify the Laws Regarding Moose Hunting Permits for Hunting Outfitters”**. Specifically, we **strongly oppose** the amended language as it stifles business partnerships, collaboration between hunting outfitters in Aroostook County, and negatively impacts the northern Maine economy.

Moose hunting in the state of Maine generates up to \$21M annually and accounts for 10% of the total \$213M generated annually by hunters of all species. Many of the highest-density moose management districts are in northern Maine, including districts that cover Aroostook County and the North Maine Woods. This means that the majority of spending by hunters and their associated parties largely occurs in rural northern counties and includes expenses for registered Maine Guides, lodging and sporting camps, equipment and supplies, taxidermy, and meat processing. These expenditures flow directly into small rural businesses and guide services/outfitters, many of whom already work collaboratively together in partnerships to support and sustain each other.

These partnerships are crucial to providing hunters, and especially those from out-of-state, with positive, robust experiences that in turn leads to repeat

business and new business generated from positive reviews. Rural communities benefit when high-performing outfitters attract more clients. Furthermore, it is important to note the Maine Lodging Tax is applicable to stays at sporting camps and that a significant amount of revenue is generated through this mechanism.

The language included in this Amendment prohibits businesses from working together, punishes the professional success that existing partnerships between outfitters have earned, and reduces the overall economic impact of the moose hunt instead of expanding it. Together, these changes result in flawed public policy that will have a deleterious effect on the Northern Maine outdoor economy which is a significant contributor to the state's economic prowess.

In conclusion, I strongly urge you to consider the devastating impact these changes will have and eliminate them. Allowing independent guides and outfitters to collaborate boosts local communities through increased hunting tourism, creates jobs and supports small businesses, and enhances the overall hunting experience for participants. Lastly, Aroostook County's strong and resilient economy heavily depends on successful hunting and outdoor recreation tourism.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this perspective and the potential impacts the Amendment will have on Maine's communities and the outdoor economy.

Sincerely,

Kiersten S. Purington, PhD, MBA
President & CEO Aroostook Partnership
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Opposition to LD 2054 – Department 3-4-2026 Amendment

Safari Club International New England Foundation has significant concerns about the Committee's approval of this Amendment. Limiting collaboration among businesses is not sound policy.

Instead of strengthening the economic benefits of the moose hunt, the Amendment undercuts them by restricting the very practices that make the industry successful.

- Barring outfitters from coordinating or transferring permits disrupts efficient business operations
- Rural regions gain when top-performing outfitters are able to draw more visitors

Restricting these partnerships would unintentionally slow economic progress in rural communities. When outfitters are allowed to grow and work together, they can:

- Boost tourism and local spending
- Support small businesses and create jobs
- Improve the experience for hunters

Moose numbers are already managed biologically through established permit quotas. Adding new limitations risks:

- Unnecessary complexity
- Reduced participation without meaningful conservation benefits

We encourage policymakers to adopt an approach that balances sustainability with economic opportunity. A flexible, market-driven structure will better meet the needs of hunters, outfitters, and rural communities while safeguarding healthy moose populations.

Thank you for your consideration.

Michael Fresco
President SCINEF

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*Deceased



To: Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
From: Greater East Grand Economic Council
Re: Opposition to LD 2054 – Amendment Proposed March 4, 2026
Date: March 9, 2026

Dear Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Greater East Grand Economic Council (GEGEC), I am writing to express concern regarding the amended language proposed on March 4, 2026 for LD 2054, “An Act to Clarify the Laws Regarding Moose Hunting Permits for Hunting Outfitters.”

The Greater East Grand Economic Council works to strengthen and support the economic vitality of communities in northern Washington county and the surrounding region. Our area relies heavily on outdoor recreation and tourism, including hunting, fishing, and guiding services. Many small businesses in our region depend on the annual moose hunt as a critical part of their economic sustainability.

The proposed amendment limiting lodge tags to five percent would have significant unintended consequences for outfitters and sporting camps in our region. Several businesses rely on lodge tags to host hunters within their own wildlife management districts. Restricting lodge tags to this level would make it extremely difficult for many outfitters to secure permits within the zones where they operate, reducing their ability to provide guided hunts for clients.

For rural communities like those in the Greater East Grand region, these hunts generate revenue that supports local guides, restaurants, meat processors, and taxidermists. Visiting hunters and their parties often travel long distances to experience Maine’s moose hunt, and their spending supports a network of small businesses that operate on narrow seasonal margins.

Limiting lodge tags in this way risks reducing the number of hunters who can participate through outfitters and may discourage repeat visits from nonresident hunters who depend on guided services. This could have a ripple effect throughout the local economy and negatively impact communities that already face limited economic opportunities.

Outdoor recreation and hunting tourism are foundational parts of the rural economy in northern Maine. Policies that unintentionally limit the ability of guides and outfitters to operate within



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their own regions threaten not only individual businesses but also the broader economic stability of our communities.

For these reasons, the Greater East Grand Economic Council respectfully urges the Committee to reconsider the amended language in LD 2054 and avoid changes that would limit the ability of licensed outfitters to operate successfully in their home districts.

Thank you for your time and consideration of the impacts this legislation may have on Maine's rural economies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christopher Hinshaw". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "C".

Christopher Hinshaw
Executive Director
Greater East Grand Economic Council