

Office of Policy and Legal Analysis

Date: March 1, 2021
To: Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
From: Rachel Olson, Legislative Analyst
Re: LD 212, "An Act To Support Senior Hunting by Allowing Lifetime Licensed Hunters over 65 Years of Age To Automatically Receive an Antlerless Dee Permit" (Ducharme)

Summary

This bill provides that a person 65 years of age or older who possesses a valid senior resident lifetime hunting license must receive a permit to lawfully take an antlerless deer in any part of the State open to the taking of antlerless deer.

Testimony

Proponents: Rep. Jack Ducharme, sponsor; Rep. Jennifer Poirier, co-sponsor; Steve Wood; Stephen Hartford

- May allow individuals to hunt longer into life than currently
- Show appreciation for lifetime licensed senior hunters
- Already award ADP to individuals with ambulatory disabilities

Opponents: Nate Webb, DIFW; Don Kleiner, MPGA; Esther Mechler;

- Result would be an unpredictable antlerless deer harvest
- Some area could sustain this, others would over harvested
- Is not in line with the Big Game Management Plan
- Would like broader discussion on ADP system at the department level
- Hunting is inhumane

Neither for nor against: Dave Trahan, SAM-ILA

- ADP system has been made less effective over time
- Would prefer a working group with DIFW to review the antlerless deer permit system

Possible Amendments

- Suggestions during the public hearing included amending the bill to require senior lifetime license holders to have to apply for the permit and to have seniors receive their permits after landowners and youth.

Notes/Additional Information

- Currently there are special provisions for landowners, individuals with ambulatory disabilities, and junior licensed hunters

From the Department:

- Approximately 44,000 senior lifetime license holder who would be eligible for this opportunity

2017

General

- There was a total of 78,393 applicants for any sort of antlerless deer permit – there were 66,050 permits available by the department.

Senior-related data

- 15,015 seniors applied for any sort of antlerless deer permit - 10,035 (or 67%) were issued some sort of antlerless deer permit.
- Of the 10,035 permits issued to seniors, 1,682 (or 17%) harvested any sort of deer.
 - The percentage of senior applicants who are issued an antlerless permit and the percentage who successfully harvest a deer is fairly close to the rates for the general hunting population.

2018

General

- There were 85,602 applicants for any sort of antlerless deer permit – there were 84,475 permits made available by the department.

Senior-related data

- In 2018, 16,468 seniors applied for any sort of antlerless permit. Of those, 12,501 or 76% won some sort of antlerless permit.

2019

General

- There were 77,214 applicants for any sort of antlerless permit. Of those, 68,145 permits were made available by the department.

Fiscal Impact

- Fiscal Status: Not Yet Determined

Links

[LD 212](#)

[Testimony](#)

[12 MRSA §11152. Antlerless deer, regulation and authority to issue permits](#)

[LD 190 from 129th, 1R](#) – reported out ONTP