

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE**

**BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE**

IN OPPOSITION TO L.D. 434

“An Act to Protect Landowners and Increase Safety on All-terrain Vehicle Trails by Increasing Funding to the ATV Recreational Management Fund”

Presented by Representative MASON of Lisbon.

Cosponsored by Senator LaFOUNTAIN of Kennebec and Representatives: COSTAIN of Plymouth, DILL of Old Town, DRINKWATER of Milford, DUNPHY of Embden, FOSTER of Dexter, LANDRY of Farmington, POMERLEAU of Standish, UNDERWOOD of Presque Isle.

DATE OF HEARING: March 20, 2023

Good afternoon Senator LaFountain, Representative Landry and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Bill Swan, Director of Licensing and Registration at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking on behalf of the Department, in opposition to **L.D. 434**.

This bill would increase the current ATV registration fees for resident and non-resident ATV owners if the owner does not belong to an official ATV club recognized by the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry.

While many ATV registrants could buy an ATV club membership and continue to pay the same ATV registration cost they pay today, those who choose not to pay for a club membership would pay the increased registration proposed in this bill. Depending on the number of customers that take advantage of the “club member discount”, there could be a significant loss of revenue to both MDIFW and ACF because of this legislation, as section “C” of the bill changes the current distribution for all registrations.

In addition, the Department has concerns with how a state-wide ATV club membership system would be administered. Unless this was done well, it could lead to much confusion and possible fraud.

The Department would like to point out that the concept of a club membership discount was discussed by the most recent ATV Task Force and the group did not recommend it.

While the Department is supportive of the concept of getting more ATV riders to join clubs, we cannot support this proposed legislation.

I would be glad to answer any questions at this time or during the work session.