

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND
HOUSING**

NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST L.D. 886

**“AN ACT TO PROTECT VOLUNTEER SEARCH AND RESCUERS CERTIFIED
BY THE MAINE ASSOCIATION FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE FROM
ADVERSE EMPLOYMENT ACTION”**

SPONSORED BY: Representative Bailey of Saco

CO-SPONSORED BY: Senator Bellows of Kennebec
Senator Davis of Piscataquis
Senator Lawrence of York
Representative Bradstreet of Vassalboro
Representative Fay of Raymond
Representative Martin of Eagle Lake
Representative Nadeau of Winslow
Representative Sylvester of Portland

DATE OF HEARING: March 11, 2019

Good morning Senator Bellows, Representative Sylvester and members of the Labor and Housing Committee. I am Lieutenant Kevin Adam of the Maine Warden Service, speaking neither for nor against **L.D. 886**.

This bill would provide support to our Certified Volunteer Search and Rescue Professionals with their employment when they are needed to deploy to a search and rescue incident in the State of Maine. This is the same protection currently provided to volunteer firemen in Maine Law within Title 26.

In addition to being a Lieutenant, I am also the Statewide Search and Rescue Coordinator for the Department. You may or may not be aware that the Department has statutory authority for all search and rescue missions for persons who have gone into the woodlands or onto the inland waters of the State on a hunting, fishing or other trip and has become lost, stranded, or drowned.

The Warden Service responds to over 400 searches per year and as such has a long-standing relationship with the Maine Association of Search Rescue (MASAR) which dates back to the early 1980's. This organization was formed to provide the Maine Warden Service with certified, competent, professional volunteers to be used on search missions. MASAR currently has 16 certified teams and 200 members spread out across the state.

Having trained search and rescue resources to use at our searches increases the detection success for all of the State search and rescue incidents.

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