

Members of the committee,

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider this written testimony which is in opposition of HB 162.

My name is Maribeth Kulynycz. I am a certified riding instructor and trail guide for Hoof Prints Trail Riding Center, I also serve as the executive secretary for the Maryland Bowhunters Society. I come to you today as a hard working Maryland resident trying to earn a living by helping people discover the benefit of exploring nature on horseback.

Hoof Prints provides a unique service in our small Wicomico County community. This is not a place where you show up, jump on a saddled horse and sit idly by on a worn out trail horse. We offer a full trail experience, which includes grooming and bonding with your horse, saddling, and a lesson on horsemanship, safety, and riding, all before heading out on the trail. We as knowledgeable guides go the extra mile to show our patrons the beauty of Maryland's natural resources and biodiversity.

I have traveled as far as Colorado to receive training and certification by CHA (The Certified Horsemanship Association). This multi-day course included rigorous safety training and testing. CHA requires continuing education to maintain eligibility, and it is also mandatory to maintain CPR and First Aid certifications. CHA provides a set of standards that we adhere to in order to ensure we provide the highest levels of safety.

So many people in today's world are starved for recreation, especially in the outdoors. Choices are limited for families when it comes to healthy activities and hobbies to enjoy together. Trail riding provides many benefits, not only physically but also mentally and emotionally.

We as instructors have taken every measure we can to provide a safe experience to some who may never get such a chance. This bill would not only harm our business, it would destroy it.

Outlets, such as our trail riding service, mean so much to many in our community and has brought many out of town visitors back to the area. We also have been able to provide camps to Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Coast Kids. Allowing these children the experience of working alongside horses in nature is priceless and the highlight of their camp experience.

This is a time when people desperately need more access to the healing benefits of nature and physical activity. We ask you to reconsider this bill which would make this service all but impossible for us to provide.

Maribeth Kulynycz