

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2009 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 906 (Frederick County Delegation)
Environmental Matters

Frederick County - Archery Hunting - Safety Zone

This bill decreases the archery hunting safety zone size, in Frederick County, from 150 yards to 50 yards from a dwelling house, residence, church, or other building or camp occupied by human beings.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not materially affect State operations or finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: Hunters may not shoot or discharge any firearm or other deadly weapon within 150 yards, known as the “safety zone,” of a dwelling house, residence, church, or other building or camp occupied by human beings. Also, hunters may not shoot at any animal while it is within the safety zone without the specific advance permission of the owner or occupant.

During any open hunting season, a person, other than the owner or occupant, may not hunt or chase willfully any animal within the safety zone without the specific advance permission of the owner or occupant.

Background: The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies’ *Hunting in America* report, based on data from 2006, found hunters invest \$1.3 billion annually to preserve,

protect, and enhance wildlife populations and the environment. In Maryland, it is estimated that over 160,000 hunters annually enjoy over two million days of hunting and contribute over \$257 million to the State's retail sales economy.

Over 7,200 people take the Maryland Hunter Education Course every year. However, hunting accidents do occur. In December 2008, a stray shotgun slug struck a daycare center in Clarksville, Howard County, raising questions about the adequacy of the current 150 yard safety zone requirement.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 713 (Senators Mooney and Brinkley) - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

Information Source(s): Frederick County, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 4, 2009
mam/ljm

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