

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2016 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 517 (Delegate Glass)
Environment and Transportation

Natural Resources - Deer Bow Hunting Season - End Date

This bill establishes that in a year when January 31 does not fall on a Saturday, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) must, by regulation, include the first Saturday of February in the deer bow hunting season.

This bill takes effect July 1, 2016.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect State operations or finances.

Local Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect local operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful.

Analysis

Current Law: DNR establishes the open season to hunt forest and upland game birds and mammals by regulation each year. DNR may adopt regulations to enlarge, extend, restrict, or prohibit hunting wildlife. There are three seasons to hunt deer in Maryland: deer bow hunting season; deer firearms season; and deer muzzle loader season. The deer bow hunting season takes place during early September through the end of January.

Under current regulations, Maryland has two deer management regions. Region A includes Allegany and Garrett counties and the western portion of Washington County. Region B includes Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Kent, Montgomery, Prince George's,

Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, Washington (eastern portion), Wicomico, and Worcester counties.

Small Business Effect: Authorizing additional deer hunting in the State may have a potential meaningful economic impact on certain types of businesses. DNR estimates that deer hunters in the State spent more than \$100 million on food, lodging, equipment, and transportation in 2006, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reports that, in 2011, the average hunter in Maryland spent \$49 per hunting day on trip-related expenditures and \$9.67 on ammunition.

In addition to businesses directly affected by hunting, the bill may also affect several other types of businesses. Most farms, for example, are small businesses. In 2011, the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service estimated that Maryland deer caused \$7.7 million in agricultural damage statewide. Based on past estimates of crop damage losses, DNR estimates that an individual deer causes \$33.05 in agricultural damage annually. To the extent that the bill reduces crop damage, farmers benefit.

The bill may also affect vehicle owners and businesses involved in the repair of vehicles. DNR estimates that there were 31,300 deer-vehicle collisions in 2013 and that the average cost per collision is \$3,400. Reducing the deer population in the State will likely reduce the number of deer-vehicle collisions, which will have a positive impact on vehicle owners and a corresponding negative impact on vehicle repair businesses.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 412 of 2015 received an unfavorable report from the House Environment and Transportation Committee.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources, Department of Legislative Services

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