

HOUSE BILL 447

M2

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

6lr0902

By: **Delegate Grammer**

Introduced and read first time: January 23, 2026

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Natural Resources – Right to Hunt, Fish, and Harvest Wildlife**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing that every person has the right to hunt, fish, and harvest
4 wildlife, including the right to use traditional methods to hunt, fish, and harvest
5 wildlife, subject to certain regulations and restrictions; establishing that the right to
6 hunt and fish is forever preserved for the public good; establishing that fishing and
7 hunting are preferred means of managing and controlling wildlife in the State; and
8 generally relating to the right to hunt, fish, and harvest wildlife in the State.

9 BY proposing an addition to the Maryland Constitution
10 Declaration of Rights
11 Article 49

12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
13 Article – Natural Resources
14 Section 4–103 and 10–102
15 Annotated Code of Maryland
16 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

17 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
18 (Three–fifths of all the members elected to each of the two Houses concurring), That it be
19 proposed that the Maryland Constitution read as follows:

20 **Declaration of Rights**

21 **ARTICLE 49.**

22 **(A) EVERY PERSON SHALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO HUNT, FISH, AND HARVEST**
23 **WILDLIFE, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO USE TRADITIONAL METHODS TO HUNT, FISH,**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 AND HARVEST WILDLIFE, SUBJECT TO REGULATIONS AND RESTRICTIONS UNDER
2 LAWS THAT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ENACTS, TO:

3 (1) PROMOTE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT; AND

4 (2) PRESERVE THE FUTURE OF HUNTING AND FISHING.

5 (B) NOTHING IN THIS ARTICLE MAY BE CONSTRUED TO LIMIT THE
6 APPLICATION OF ANY PROVISION OF LAW RELATING TO TRESPASS OR PROPERTY
7 RIGHTS.

8 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read
9 as follows:

10 **Article – Natural Resources**

11 4–103.

12 (a) The General Assembly finds that:

13 (1) Fishing is a valued part of the State’s cultural and social heritage that
14 provides unique recreational benefits to residents of the State; and

15 (2) Fishing plays an important part in the State’s economy by contributing
16 to tax revenues and employment and supports the conservation, preservation, and
17 management of the State’s fisheries, natural areas, and water resources.

18 (b) It is the intent of the General Assembly that [residents]:

19 (1) RESIDENTS of the State have [a] THE right to fish, INCLUDING THE
20 RIGHT TO USE TRADITIONAL METHODS TO FISH, subject to regulations and restrictions
21 under laws that the General Assembly enacts;

22 (2) THE RIGHT TO FISH SHALL BE FOREVER PRESERVED FOR THE
23 PUBLIC GOOD; AND

24 (3) FISHING SHALL BE A PREFERRED MEANS OF MANAGING AND
25 CONTROLLING WILDLIFE IN THE STATE.

26 10–102.

27 (a) The General Assembly finds that:

28 (1) Hunting is a valued part of the State’s cultural and social heritage that
29 provides unique recreational benefits to residents of the State; and

(2) Hunting plays an important part in the State's economy by contributing to tax revenues and employment and, through the receipt of federal funds, supports the conservation, preservation, and management of the State's wildlife, natural areas, and related resources.

(b) It is the intent of the General Assembly that [residents]:

(1) **RESIDENTS** of the State have [a] **THE** right to hunt, **INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO USE TRADITIONAL METHODS TO HUNT**, subject to regulations and restrictions under laws that the General Assembly enacts;

(2) **THE RIGHT TO HUNT SHALL BE FOREVER PRESERVED FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD; AND**

(3) **HUNTING SHALL BE A PREFERRED MEANS OF MANAGING AND CONTROLLING WILDLIFE IN THE STATE.**

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the General Assembly determines that the amendment to the Maryland Constitution proposed by Section 1 of this Act affects multiple jurisdictions and that the provisions of Article XIV, § 1 of the Maryland Constitution concerning local approval of constitutional amendments do not apply.

SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the amendment to the Maryland Constitution proposed by Section 1 of this Act shall be submitted to the qualified voters of the State at the next general election to be held in November 2026 for adoption or rejection in accordance with Article XIV of the Maryland Constitution. At that general election, the vote on the proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be by ballot, and on each ballot there shall be printed the words "For the Constitutional Amendment" and "Against the Constitutional Amendment", as now provided by law. Immediately after the election, all returns shall be made to the Governor of the vote for and against the proposed amendment, as directed by Article XIV of the Maryland Constitution, and further proceedings held in accordance with Article XIV.

SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 2 of this Act is contingent on the passage of Section 1 of this Act, a constitutional amendment, and its ratification by the voters of the State.

SECTION 6. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, subject to Section 5 of this Act, Section 2 of this Act shall take effect on the proclamation of the Governor that the constitutional amendment, having received a majority of the votes cast at the general election, has been adopted by the people of Maryland.