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Committee: Budget and Taxation
Testimony on: HB7 – “Venison Donation Expenses - Income Tax Credit and Grant Program”
Position: Support
Hearing Date: March 25, 2021

The Sierra Club urges a favorable report on HB7, as amended in the House. This bill alters the existing venison donation income tax credit by extending eligibility to certain donations made to the Montgomery County Deer Donation Program. The bill also establishes, beginning in fiscal 2023, a Venison Donation Grant Program to be administered by the Department of Natural Resources.

This bill is especially important now that there are so many communities which are food insecure during the COVID pandemic. It will encourage those hunting deer as well as helping the food banks which will welcome this food for their many clients. Food banks across the state are running out of food because there are so many new clients. High protein donations are especially needed rather than the canned and boxed items which are now rationed. There are existing regulated operations for the preparation of the meat which will be provided to the soup kitchens such as Manna in Montgomery County.

Humane control of deer also decreases the incidence of Lyme Disease, car accidents involving deer, and the destruction of forests, native plants, crops, landscaping, and gardens by deer overpopulation.

In summary, we recommend that the Committee favorably report this legislation.

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Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is America’s oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. The Maryland Chapter has over 75,000 members and supporters, and the Sierra Club nationwide has over 800,000 members and nearly four million supporters.