

JACK BAILEY
Legislative District 29
Calvert and St. Mary's Counties

Judicial Proceedings Committee



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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March 10, 2021

Senate Bill 356 – Calvert County – Sunday Hunting

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to introduce Senate Bill 356 – Calvert County – Sunday Hunting. This bill would add Calvert County to the list of counties where hunting would be permitted on each Sunday of the game bird and game mammal seasons. In 2019, I sponsored legislation that extended Sunday hunting in St. Mary's County in this manner. Following passage of that bill, I began to hear from constituents in Calvert County about extending these same privileges to Calvert County residents.

I believe very strongly that all Marylanders should be able to hunt on Sundays. Hunting is significantly regulated by the State. There is a requirement that hunters must attend a Hunter Safety Education class, pass a written test, demonstrate firearm safety, and purchase a hunting license. Before hunting on private property, the hunter is required by law to get written permission of the landowner. The landowner can determine when, for what, what methods, and how hunting is allowed on their own property.

It is particularly important for our younger hunters, who often have school sporting events on weekdays and Saturdays, to permit Sunday hunting so that they can have an opportunity to participate in this great tradition. Sunday has become a very popular day for hunting in our State. Despite the current restrictions, according to the Department of Natural Resources, hunters harvested over 8,000 deer on Sundays in 2020, representing 10% of the total harvest.

Maryland's restrictions on Sunday hunting are a relic of an era that has long since passed. It is legal to target shoot on Sundays and to trap and kill groundhogs, coyotes, fisher, gray and red fox, nutria, opossum, raccoon and skunks on Sunday. It is also legal to shoot on a regulated shooting area or with a crop damage permit on Sunday. The current Sunday hunting laws are a significant restriction on the rights of private property owners to hunt or permit hunting on their own property.

As introduced, Senate Bill 356 would expand Sunday hunting on private and public lands of Calvert County. After introduction of this bill, the Board of County Commissioners of Calvert County requested to amend this bill to remove the provisions pertaining to public lands. As amended, this bill will still expand Sunday hunting rights in Calvert County, but only on private property. With this amendment, Senate Bill 356 has the support of the Calvert County Senators, the Calvert County Delegation, and the Board of County Commissioners of Calvert County.

I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 356 as amended to remove the public lands portion of the bill. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Bailey".

Senator Jack Bailey
District 29