



## **Summary of written testimony submitted**

### **Jacquie Cowan**

representing the Maryland Horse Council  
also a member and event coordinator for the Tuckahoe EC in  
Queen Anne County.

I am a trail rider and I teach trail safety.

- ❖ **A majority of Marylanders oppose Sunday hunting.** An independent Gonzales statewide poll in 2018 found that 68.9% of respondents oppose Sunday hunting, and 78% would alter their recreational plans to avoid hunters.
- ❖ **In a Maryland Horse Council 2016 poll**, 85% of respondents said they changed their schedules or riding locations to avoid encountering hunters.
- ❖ **Even DNR's own commissioned survey** found that a majority of the general population does not favor Sunday hunting and does not want to see it expanded.
- ❖ **Less than 3% of Marylanders are licensed hunters.**
- ❖ **The Maryland horse industry** represents \$2.1 billion in economic impact; we have more horses per square mile than any other state; 51.8% of Maryland households contain horse enthusiasts.
- ❖ **Since the pandemic**, widespread use of outdoor recreation and natural resources by the general public has greatly increased.
- ❖ This bill would allow hunting in Queen Anne's on **every Sunday of the year** because it covers all species of game birds and game mammals.

❖ **The Maryland Horse Council does not oppose hunting.** We wish to preserve Sundays as the one day of the week when children and adults who are hikers, birdwatchers, dog walkers, trail riders and other outdoor enthusiasts could enjoy the outdoors without concern for adverse interactions with hunters.

❖ **Recreational hunters argue they need Sundays** because they work all week and have other things to do on Saturdays – this also applies to most Maryland families. *So why should one group get special consideration? Where is the balancing of the public good?*

❖ **We recognize that private land owners have some right to decide** what uses they allow on their land. But such rights have never been absolute, as any review of zoning and land use rules can plainly establish. And, as a practical matter the public/private land distinction affords little relief since public and private tracts are often relatively small, noncontiguous, intertwined and rarely well-marked.

As an example, **Tuckahoe State Park** in Queen Anne and Caroline Counties is surrounded by private fields that may be hunted. The trails and camping are adjacent to these fields with no boundary fences.

**In Conclusion, we urge the Committee to give HB 225 an unfavorable report.**

**Reference** submitted written testimony from Joyce Bell on behalf of the Tuckahoe Equestrian Center.