

SportsmensCaucus_FAV_SB769.pdf

Uploaded by: Bailey, Jack

Position: FAV

Senate Chair
JACK BAILEY
Legislative District 29
Calvert & St. Mary's Counties

Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus
James Senate Office Building, Room 402
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Senate Co-Chair
KATIE FRY HESTER
Legislative District 9



House Chair
NED CAREY
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Legislative District 1A

The Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus

The Sportsmen's Best Friend in Annapolis

February 24, 2021

Senate Bill 769 – Income Tax Credit for Venison Donation – Alterations, Extension, and Testing for Chronic Wasting Disease – SUPPORT

Dear Chairman Guzzone and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus, I am writing today in support of **Senate Bill 769 – Income Tax Credit for Venison Donation – Alterations, Extension, and Testing for Chronic Wasting Disease**. This bill alters the venison donation tax credit by increasing the value of the tax credit and extending the tax credit program through June 30, 2028. Beginning in tax year 2021, the bill increases the value of the tax credit to up to \$75 for each qualified donation, and the annual limitation on the tax credits that may be claimed is increased to \$600. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) must report to the General Assembly by December 31, 2021 on the testing of deer brought to deer processors for chronic wasting disease.

This bill helps the processor and hunter because the processor will be paid the full amount of the processing fee and the hunter will be reimbursed for the entire processing fee. This bill also benefits landowners and farmers because these incentives will reduce the deer population, and it assists the hungry by providing them with venison. In particular, the report required by this bill starts to look at venison donated through this program to ensure that the State is providing a safe and healthy food source to the hungry.

The Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 769, and we thank Senator Hester for introducing this bill.

Sincerely,

Senator Jack Bailey
Senate Chair

Bauer SB769 Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Bauer, Leslie

Position: FAV

Leslie Bauer
PO BOX 7
Dayton, MD 21036
443-812-1662
Labauer5@verizon.net

February 22, 2021

Regarding SB769: Income Tax Credit for Venison Donation

I would like to thank Senator Hester for introducing SB769, Income Tax Credit for Venison Donation.

Please accept my testimony in favor of this bill.

SB769 does several things – all of which are a win-win both for the farmer and for the community at large. This past year has brought an increased need for food donations as many have struggled with the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, farmers face the challenge of raising crops with increasing damage from a growing deer population. Deer, on average, can cause \$50/acre (or more) of crop damage on Maryland crops. A farmer is allowed to harvest deer under deer management permits, however they still have to pay the cost to have the deer processed.

There is a credit currently in place, however it is a modest amount against the increased deer processing costs. The modest alterations introduced by SB769 give an added incentive to the farmer to recoup some of the crop damage loss, as well as provide a needed source of protein for local food banks. Not only does SB769 increase the tax credit, but it also allows a farmer to double the amount of deer they can have processed and donate to a food bank, while still receiving credit for doing so.

Support of SB769 allows hunters throughout the state of Maryland to make more food bank donations each year through this tax credit program.

Thank you for your consideration,



Leslie Bauer

SB 0769 PDF Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Cawley, Amy

Position: FAV



MARYLAND
FOOD BANK
EASTERN SHORE

28500 Owens Branch Road
Salisbury, MD 21801

Tel 410.742.0500

Fax 410.742.0554

mdfoodbank.org

Testimony for SB769

As a near 10-year employee of the MD Food Bank and Volunteer Coordinator for Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry (FHFH) for a few years, I am in support of SB 0769. In one of the wealthiest states in the country, Maryland is home to over 1 million food insecure individuals. From the MD Food Bank side, protein is one of the most needed items for distribution. On the agricultural side, deer remain a challenge in the success of our farmers. Deer wreak havoc by eating and destroying grain, produce, and even Christmas trees. It seems a logical way to work to assist those facing food insecurity and decrease the deer population is to harvest deer to provide much needed protein for the hungry.

As volunteer coordinator for FHFH, I have learned that the largest challenge facing butchers is proper compensation. The message from butchers remains consistent in that costs are rising. Butchers have their own families to feed and cannot be expected to use their time and resources to process deer for limited compensation. SB 0769 provides an avenue to assist both the butchers and food banks meet the two goals stated above. This bill also benefits the hunter who delivers and pays for the processing of the deer up front. Thus the passage of this bill looks to be a “win-win-win.”

Amy Cawley

Farm to Food Bank Coordinator, MD Food Bank

Volunteer Coordinator for FHFH, Mid-Shore-13 (Caroline, Talbot, Queen Anne, & Dorchester County)

MEMBER OF

AMERICA

Senate Bill 769 Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Dayhoff, Bitá

Position: FAV

Bita Dayhoff, President

February 22, 2021

Dear Senator Hester,

On behalf of Community Action Council of Howard County, I fully support SB769 which offers a modest alteration to the excising income tax credit program in order to offset the rising cost of venison processing and increases the opportunity for donation of venison to local food banks.

Since the onset of the pandemic, the Howard County Food Bank has seen an increase of 300% in demand for food assistance. At the same time, it has experienced a reduction in donations which has forced us to purchase food from the Maryland Food Bank or other local grocery stores in order to meet the high demand.

To further complicate matters, the prices at the grocery stores have skyrocketed making it harder for those who are struggling to make ends meet as well as for the food banks. From February to June of last year, meat and poultry prices rose nearly 11%, with beef and veal prices seeing the highest rise, spiking 20%. People are paying more for other staples too: egg prices have shot up 10% and shoppers are shelling out 4% more for cereals and fresh vegetables. These high costs have created a shortage of available protein which can be overcome by introducing venison in the diet.

This is a win/win situation that can support the families needing food, the food bank looking for donations and the farmers whose crop can be protected from damage from deer.

Any opportunity to increase the capacity and opportunity for the individuals to donate should be maximized in order to weather the pandemic storm. As such, we fully support the increase in State income tax credit for those who hunt and harvest and donate the processed deer meat to their local food banks.

Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

Regards,

Bita Dayhoff

President

Support of SB 769 - Income Tax Credit for Venison

Uploaded by: Ferguson, Colby

Position: FAV



Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

3358 Davidsonville Road • Davidsonville, MD 21035 • (410) 922-3426

February 24, 2021

To: Senate Budget & Taxation Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: Support of SB 769 - Income Tax Credit – Food Donation Pilot Program – Extension

On behalf of our member families, I submit this written testimony in support of SB 769, legislation that Increases from \$50 to \$75 the maximum amount of qualified expenses an individual may claim as a credit against the State income tax when they donate processed deer meat to a food bank. It also increases from \$200 to \$600 the maximum aggregate credit amount the individual may claim in a taxable year. This bill extends for 5 years the termination date of the credit. Lastly, the bill requires the Department of Natural Resources to report to the General Assembly on or before December 31, 2021, on testing of deer for chronic wasting disease.

Current law does not put a maximum aggregate credit on deer that are harvested under a deer crop damage permit. This bill does not affect that part of the law.

MDFB Policy: We support a state tax credit for each deer donated to a food bank or other food donation non-profit under a crop damage permit.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 769 AND ENCOURAGES A FAVORABLE REPORT.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colby Ferguson'.

Colby Ferguson
Director of Government Relations

For more information contact Colby Ferguson at (240) 578-0396

MDGA_Senator Hester_FAV_SB769.pdf

Uploaded by: Hester, Katie

Position: FAV

KATIE FRY HESTER
Legislative District 9
Carroll and Howard Counties

Education, Health, and
Environmental Affairs Committee

Chair, Joint Committee on
Cybersecurity, Information Technology
and Biotechnology



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony in Support of SB769- Income Tax Credit for Venison Donation - Alterations,
Extension, and Testing for Chronic Wasting Disease**

February 24, 2021

Chairman Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapepe and members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee:

Thank you for your consideration of Senate Bill 769. Over the past year our communities have seen an unprecedented need for food assistance. Enrollment in the Federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) at the end of last year was up 14 percent from the same time in 2019, with nearly 43 million Americans receiving benefits. Even in normal times, the Maryland Food Bank estimates that one in nine Marylanders, including one in seven children in Maryland, suffer from food security. Over the past year, we have all seen food bank lines wrapped around street corners, and have had constituents reach out not knowing where they would find their next meal. I want to thank this committee for all the hard work you've already done in passing the RELIEF Act with amendments to address food insecurity, but this problem persists and no options can be left off the table.

This simple bill seeks to further address the issue of food insecurity, and better engage Marylanders in providing aid to their neighbors and community members. Currently, the State of Maryland operates this program, providing tax credits to Marylanders for the donation of processed venison to a non-profit venison donation program. It is a small program, facilitating venison donations every year by providing tax credits of up to \$50 to cover processing expenses, capped at \$200 annually.

SB769 makes a handful of modest alterations to this existing program. First, this bill increases the tax credit for each donation from \$50 to \$75 to cover the cost of processing venison prior to donation. With the cost of processing rising in recent years, this increase in the allowable tax credit will make sure the program continues to achieve its intended goal. Additionally, we propose an increase in the annual cap of income tax credits from \$200 to \$600 through the program, to encourage more donations in this time of need, as well as an extension of the program's sunset from 2023 to 2027. Finally, the bill directs the Department of Natural Resources to study the testing of deer brought to processors for chronic wasting disease and report their findings to the General Assembly by December 31, 2021. This provision is

intended to provide additional oversight and ensure the quality of donations being made through this program.

This is a modest bill to make an existing program more effective and meet a need for food security that we have all seen spike over the past year. These alterations will provide hunters across the State with more incentive to provide donations to their local non-profits through this program - and according to the fiscal note, at minimal impact to State revenues. For those reasons, **I respectfully request a favorable report for Senate Bill 769.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Fry Hester". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "K" and "H".

Senator Katie Fry Hester
Carroll and Howard Counties

Legislation Senate Bill 769 .pdf

Uploaded by: miles, william

Position: FAV



P.O. Box 501
Huntingtown, Maryland 20639
billmilesmd@comcast.net

SENATE BUDGET & TAXATION COMMITTEE

February 24, 2021

SENATE BILL 769

Income Tax Credit for Venison Donation – Alterations, Extension and Testing
for Chronic Wasting Disease

SUPPORT

The Hunters of Maryland represent the interests of Maryland’s hunting community at both the State and local level. Few realize that it is the hunters who underwrite virtually 100% of all wildlife management/research costs through their purchase of hunting licenses, stamps and equipment. For the record, we do so willingly, aka *American System of Conservation Funding*.

THE HONORABLE GUY GUZZONE, CHAIR
HONORABLE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Hunters of Maryland commend Senators Hester and Bailey – Senate Vice Co-Chair and Chair, respectively, of the bi-partisan Maryland Legislative Sportsmen’s Caucus -- for their foresight in proposing not only to increase the amount and duration of the tax credit authorized for the harvesting/donation of deer to 501 (c)(3) non-profit organizations, aka *Farmers & Hunters Feeding the Hungry*, et al, but also to have the State assess the potential health-related implications attendant to donated deer from a CWD perspective.

It is important for the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee to understand that other bills introduced during the 2021 Session re deer harvesting have not garnered similar support; but, instead, vehement opposition. Senate Bill 798/House Bill 594 would commercialize the sale of venison comparable to a \$50 cash bounty program -- ruled illegal by the Attorney General but ignored -- launched by Anne Arundel County in Fall 2020. When taxpayer dollars are used to harvest a publicly owned resource, the detrimental impact is measurable, aka decimation, poaching and black markets.

Bill Miles
Advocate, Hunters of Maryland

Senate Bill 0769_md.pdf

Uploaded by: Smith, Nancy

Position: FAV



Senate Bill 0769

Income Tax Credit – Venison Donation – Extension

Position: Support

Dear Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee:

I am writing on behalf of Senate Bill 0739, sponsored by Senator Bailey and Senator Hester, which extends and increases the value of the tax credit with the Venison Donation Program.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic started in March 2020, its economic impact has caused more and more Marylanders to seek food assistance, many for the first time. At the Maryland Food Bank, we've seen our year-over-year, statewide food distribution efforts increase by 89%.

During this time, many of our traditional food donation streams ground to a halt. They struggled to keep their shelves stocked for the general public, leaving little to donate to the food bank. As a result, the food bank has had to purchase the majority of the food it has distributed. For example, MFB has seen a 356% increase in the amount of money spent on purchased food (\$23.8M vs \$5.2M) from March 1 to January 31.

One donation source we are grateful to rely on is venison from state agencies. We have received donations of venison for several years through state agencies, and it is a good protein source for our Network Partners to distribute to those in need.

This tax incentive program with our hunters will help increase the value of the tax credit. For many years, the hunters have been a lifeline in providing this protein that many would otherwise not be able to access.

The continuation of the tax credit will not only help our hunters but will also increase donations to the Maryland Food Bank – which is very much needed and appreciated as the pandemic continues to place a higher demand on food banks.

We stand behind this bill and urge the Committee to adopt a favorable report of Senate Bill 0769.

Sincerely,

Nancy Smith
Sr. Director of Government Relations

2021 MD Legislation - SB0769 - Amend Tax Credit -

Uploaded by: Wilson, Josh

Position: FAV



To: **The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky, Chair**
Honorable Members
Chair, Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 West Wing
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

Re: **SB 769**
Position: **SUPPORT / FAVORABLE**
Date: **February 22, 2021**

Chairman Pinsky:

My name is Josh Wilson and I am the Executive Director of Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry, a venison donation ministry founded by my father in the fall of 1997.

I would like you to know that Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry SUPPORTS the passage of Senate Bill 769 to increase the Maryland income tax credit for venison donation.

For 24 years now Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry has provided the hunters and landowners of Maryland with the opportunity to donate deer to a network of participating butcher shops. Our organization raises financial support to pay for the processing and packaging of these deer into meat for distribution free of charge to food banks, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, and ministries. *Since 1997 we have successfully provided over 9.8 million servings of nutritious meat to the less fortunate of Maryland from deer donated by hunters and landowners.*

In a typical year the cost to pay the meat processing bills for the deer available for donation by hunters and landowners across Maryland exceeds the financial support our organization receives. Many butcher shops stop accepting donated deer in the latter portion of the hunting season, thereby reducing the amount of meat that is provided to the needy of Maryland through our partnering hunger relief agencies and programs. In addition, the average cost to have a deer processed across the state for our ministry and for individuals has risen steadily over the years.

For these reasons, Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry SUPPORTS the passage of Senate Bill 769 to increase the tax credit funding available for the offset of meat processing costs incurred by individuals who donate their deer for hunger relief after our funding is exhausted.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joshua A. Wilson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joshua A. Wilson
Executive Director
Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry