

HB485 Senate Sponsor Testimony.pdf

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Position: FAV



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of HB485
Montgomery County-Deer Hunting-Sundays

March 22, 2022- The Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
Committee

The explosion of the deer population in Montgomery County has continued to cause many problems for residents, including an increase in car accidents and agricultural damage. State Farm estimates that there were an average of 31,500 deer-vehicle collisions in Maryland during each of the last five past years.ⁱ

A 2014 Deer Damage Survey conducted by Montgomery County Parks found that of the 19,197 acres of agricultural land in the County, overall loss from deer amounted to 16%.ⁱⁱ Deer can consume six-to-eight pounds of plants per day, which negatively impacts native vegetation, agricultural crop yields, and wildlife.

HB485 is a reintroduction of the Montgomery County Sunday Hunting bill passed in 2017ⁱⁱⁱ, to remove the sunset that would go into effect this year. This bill authorizes the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to allow a person to hunt deer on Sunday in Montgomery County throughout the deer hunting season on private property.

According to DNR, regulated hunting is the most cost-effective deer population control mechanism available throughout the State, and Sunday hunting has positively contributed to managing the white-tailed deer population where it is now permitted.

Last year, more than 8% of the deer harvest in the County occurred on Sunday. This is important because the majority of Sunday hunting days are open to archery deer hunters, and archery harvests represent the majority of the deer taken in Montgomery County.^{iv}

I encourage a favorable vote on this bill, which passed in 2017, to ensure that the deer population in our County continues to be managed through controlled hunting methods.

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- i [MD-Annual-Deer-Report-2019-2020.pdf \(maryland.gov\)](#)
 - ii [Recommendations for FY 2020 \(montgomeryparks.org\)](#)
 - iii [Legislation - HB0310 \(maryland.gov\)](#)
 - iv According to DNR

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MARYLAND
HORSE
COUNCIL

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One Common Bond: The Horse
One Common Voice: The Horse Council

Testimony of the Maryland Horse Council on
HB 485 - Montgomery County - Deer Hunting - Sundays MC 25-22
Favorable

Hearing before the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee,
March 22, 2022

The Maryland Horse Council (MHC) is a membership-based, umbrella trade association of the entire horse industry in Maryland. Our membership includes horse farms and stables, horse-related businesses, and horse owners, representing all facets of the Maryland equestrian community, from the owners of race horses to the owners of trail horses or just beloved retired companion horses. As such, we represent over 30,000 Marylanders.

As the Committee is likely aware, MHC has opposed Sunday hunting for many years. Nevertheless, in the spirit of compromise, MHC introduced a bill in 2016 (SB 1061), that would have allowed Sunday hunting on all Sunday mornings in the firearms season until 10:30 am, statewide. That bill did not pass. Nevertheless, in the interest of putting this issue to rest in Montgomery County, the Maryland Horse Council supported HB 310 in 2017, which established the “hunting until 10:30 am on Sundays” rule in Montgomery County. We also supported similar bills for Kent and Wicomico, which passed and are in effect.

We believe the “10:30 am rule” is working well in Montgomery, and as this bill is a technical correction that does not increase Sunday hunting, we support its passage.

Respectfully submitted,

The Maryland Horse Council
844-634-6773



MARYLAND
HORSE
COUNCIL

Respectfully submitted,

THE MARYLAND HORSE COUNCIL
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Position: INFO



Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary
Allan Fisher, Deputy Secretary

Bill Number: House Bill 485

Short Title: Montgomery County - Deer Hunting - Sundays

Department's Position: Letter of Information

Explanation of Department's Position

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR or the Department) provides this letter of information on HB 485, which would increase hunting recreation in Montgomery County. Increased game mammal and game bird hunting opportunities assist with population management and will result in additional revenue for those industries and groups that support hunting.

Hunting remains the most effective method for controlling and managing the deer population throughout Maryland. The Department advises that Sunday hunting has contributed positively to managing the state's white-tailed deer population in the 20 counties where it is now permitted. Sunday hunting can be especially important if the weather causes unfavorable hunting conditions on the Saturday of the same weekend. Likewise, many hunters only have time to hunt on weekends, so allowing Sunday hunting essentially doubles their opportunity to pursue deer.

On Sundays during the 2020-2021 deer seasons in Montgomery County, 299 deer were harvested. DNR estimates another 15-20% would be harvested on the additional Sundays in Montgomery County depending on how the Sundays were allocated for the three weapon seasons in the county.

For additional information, please feel free to contact our Legislative and Constituent Services Director, Bunky Luffman.