

Support of SB 497 - Deer Management Permit - Hunti

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Position: FAV



Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

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

March 23, 2022

To: House Environment & Transportation Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: Support of SB 497 – Deer Management Permit - Hunting on State Land Leased by Permit Holder – Authorization

On behalf of our member families, I submit this written testimony in support of SB 497 legislation that authorizes an individual who hunts deer under a Deer Management Permit to use a shotgun or breech loading center fired rifle approved by the Department to hunt deer throughout the year, including all deer hunting seasons, on State land leased by a permit holder for the purpose of cultivating crops.

Due to an unintended consequence from a bill that passed nearly 9 years ago, state-owned land that has been used to grow crops by entities like the University of Maryland Extension has been deemed to not be allowed the use of deer crop damage permits unless the land is located in Baltimore County, Charles County, Calvert County, St. Mary's County, or Harford County. The previous bill's intention was to allow the use of a rifle for Deer Management Permit holders in these counties where a shotgun is only allowed for the firearm hunting season. Because only these five counties were listed in the statute, it consequently excluded the other 18 counties from being allowed to use DMP's on state-owned land. It wasn't until 2020, that the AG's office found this discrepancy and had DNR stop issuing the DMP's to the counties not listed in the statute. There was never the intention of removing this valuable tool for the rest of the state. However, the limited language did that.

This bill is a corrective bill to remove that unintended consequence.

MDFB Policy: The following actions will decrease crop damage from deer, and we support immediate enactment: Allow farmers to control deer on public lands rented for agricultural purposes.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 497 AND ENCOURAGES A FAVORABLE REPORT.

Colby Ferguson
Director of Government Relations

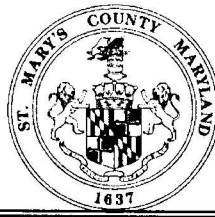
For more information contact Colby Ferguson at (240) 578-0396

104 SB 497 CSMC signed.pdf

Uploaded by: Randy Guy

Position: FAV

**COMMISSIONERS OF
ST. MARY'S COUNTY**



James R. Guy, President
Eric Colvin, Commissioner
Michael L. Hewitt, Commissioner
Todd B. Morgan, Commissioner
John E. O'Connor, Commissioner

Senate Bill 497
Deer Management Permit –
Hunting on State Land Leased by Permit Holder - Authorization

SUPPORT

March 22, 2022

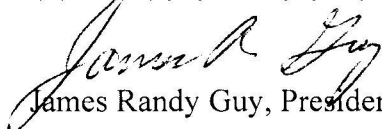
Delegate Kumar P. Barve, Chairman
Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 251
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Barve:

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County **SUPPORT** SB 497 - Deer Management Permit - Hunting on State Land Leased by Permit Holder – Authorization which is being heard in the Environment and Transportation Committee.

We support SB 497 and urge a favorable report. We appreciate the introduction of this legislation and believe it will benefit the citizens of St. Mary's County. We look forward to working with you on this and other initiatives throughout the session.

Sincerely,
COMMISSIONERS OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY


James Randy Guy, President

CSMC/AB/sf
T:/Consent/2022/104

Cc: Senator Jack Bailey
Delegate Matthew Morgan
Delegate Gerald Clark
Delegate Brian Crosby
Commissioner Eric Colvin
Commissioner Michael Hewitt
Commissioner Todd Morgan
Commissioner John O'Connor
David Weiskopf, Interim County Administrator
John S. Houser, Assistant County Attorney

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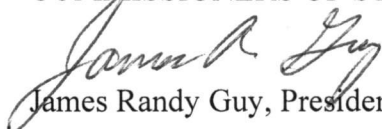
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SB0497_DNR_LOI_ENT_3-23-22.pdf

Uploaded by: Bunky Luffman

Position: INFO



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

Bill Number: Senate Bill 497

Short Title: Deer Management Permit - Hunting on State Land Leased by Permit Holder - Authorization

Department's Position: Letter of Information

Explanation of Department's Position

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provides the following information on SB 497.

Deer Management Permits (DMPs) are issued by DNR to help landowners and farmers resolve legitimate damage to commercial farm crops, orchards, nurseries and certain managed forests. In Baltimore County, Charles County, Calvert County, St. Mary's County, and Harford County, an individual who hunts deer under a DMP may: use a shotgun or breech loading centerfire rifle approved by DNR to hunt deer throughout the year, including all deer hunting seasons, in the locations and under the conditions set forth in the permit. Permit holders may also hunt on state lands that are leased to cultivate crops in those five counties in locations and under conditions set by DNR in the permit.

This bill expands the use of DMPs from the five counties noted above to all public lands in all counties in Maryland beginning July 1, 2022. The bill also authorizes all DMP permit holders throughout the state to use specified weapons, including centerfire rifles, to hunt deer throughout the year, including all deer hunting seasons, in the locations and under the conditions set forth in a permit. Currently only certain firearms are legal for deer hunting in certain counties. In addition to several other locations across the state, HB 592 would authorize the University of Maryland, Wye Education Center to harvest deer on a Deer Management Permit outside of the regular deer hunting seasons and bag limits in Queen Anne's county.

DNR supports expanded hunting opportunities and supports deer harvest on public lands in certain circumstances so long as public safety issues are addressed and certain land areas are excluded such as a field edge along a park trail or a day use area that is regularly used by park visitors.

Instead of *requiring* DNR, and other public land holders, to award DMPs and allow the use of specified weapons, it may be more prudent to instead *authorize* DNR, and other public land

holders, to award DMPs in all counties and provide those public landholders discretion over the locations and permit conditions.

For any additional information, please contact our Legislative and Constituent Services Director, Bunky Luffman.