

HOUSE BILL 1279 : PLEASE OPPOSE

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Dear Delegates on the MD House Environment and Transportation Committee,

Please **OPPOSE** House Bill 1279 ! **This bill would wipe out the hunting safety protections that are currently carefully legislated according to the differing needs and desires of each County, as represented by our elected County delegates!** This bill is very disrespectful to the concerns and values of MD citizens and our delegates, unique to each County.

SAFETY ZONES: This bill would obliterate the no-hunting safety zones around our homes that have been carefully chosen in each County, reducing them to a statewide minimum that is completely unacceptable. **Many of us in Baltimore County live with our homes and backyards right next to public lands like parks and reservoirs and other lands where hunting currently is allowed. So in Baltimore County, for example, the safety zone is wisely and vigorously maintained to at least 150-yards, which is the minimum that residents here want.**



THIS IS A CROSSBOW NOT A GUN!!

THIS AD RAN IN THE NRA'S AMERICAN RIFLEMAN MAGAZINE!!!



Modern bow and arrow weapons are becoming more like rifles (the razor-bladed arrows can travel 150 yards in 1 second!). The 150 yard safety zone we currently have should be considered a *minimum*, and the law currently reflects this need for counties that value this protection.

“Tree Stands” and “aiming down” do not reduce the need for a safety zone of at least 150 yards. No one wants to look out from their bedrooms and back yards to see armed people in tree stands! (We know how disconcerting this is – it happened to us, from our bedroom and backyard seeing armed people in stands less than 150 yards away from the house, and thankfully we got help thanks to our current safety zone protection. We’ve even found razor-bladed arrows in our neighborhood backyards and safety zone, along the popular path where people walk with their pets and families -- but if this bill were to pass, residents like us would have no protection or recourse!! And it would destroy peace of mind and enjoyment of being outside in our own back yards and neighborhoods.



Please note that hunting can *already* occur closer to peoples’ homes and within their safety zones across the state, if the resident gives permission. What this bill would do is to force hunting in neighborhoods and closer to homes even where it is NOT wanted by the residents, and in counties that don’t want this!

Note also that shortening safety zones has been shown as an ineffective strategy for significantly changing or reducing deer populations, but it does cause a great deal of distress for humans. Our neighborhood has found non-lethal, peaceful ways of living with deer and other wildlife in our area to be much more effective and desirable.

SUNDAY HUNTING: Maryland has a proud and much-appreciated tradition of preserving Sundays as a no-hunting day of peace for people and animals during hunting seasons, (which for deer season has been continually stretched to an extremely long period of 5 months!). Though those in my household and neighborhood try to enjoy the outdoors several days a week, we plan our whole week around Sunday being our peaceful “woods hike” day. It is the only day of the week we can be out in the woods and other lands for hiking and enjoying the wildlife and the peace of the outdoors without fear of encountering people with weapons in tree stands, seeing wounded animals, or startling animals into harm’s way. Our neighborhood and County values this very much, as do

families who enjoy hiking in our state parks and other public lands. HB1279 would obliterate a County's right to protect this tradition, by removing voters and their Delegates from being able to protect it! Once again, HB1279 disrespects the voters and delegates of MD, and the fact that Maryland counties may have differing needs and values.



IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO OUR QUALITY OF LIFE, SAFETY, AND PEACE OF MIND that our no-Hunting safety zones not be reduced, and no-Sunday-Hunting protections be preserved! This bill would dishonor and wipe out the different needs and protections worked out for each County, by our own residents and our delegates.

PLEASE OPPOSE HB1279, and any attempt to reduce safety zones or to open Sunday hunting in Counties that do not want this.

With urgency and gratitude,
-Jennifer Wiseman
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