



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**



March 9, 2022

To: House Environment & Transportation Committee

From: Lisa Radov, President and Chairman, Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.

Re: Sunday Hunting and Archery Hunting Safety Zones - Statewide Authorization and Establishment- HB 1279- Oppose

Chair Barve, Vice - Chair Stein, members of the Environment & Transportation Committee, my name is Lisa Radov. I am the President and Chair of Maryland Votes for Animals. We champion humane legislation to improve the lives of animals in Maryland. I am here today representing Maryland Votes for Animals and The Humane Society of The United States. Speaking for both of our organizations and our thousands of members across the State, we respectfully request that the House Environment & Transportation Committee give an unfavorable vote to Sunday Hunting and Archery Hunting Safety Zones - Statewide Authorization and Establishment – HB 1279.

This bill would open ALL counties in Maryland to Sunday hunting by authorizing the Department of Natural Resources to allow hunting on private property and public land designated for hunting by the State and establish a uniform statewide safety zone for archery hunters.

Are the residents of every county asking for this change?

This legislation would presume that the interests of the residents of counties from Garrett, Allegheny, Montgomery, Talbot, Howard County, Baltimore County and Baltimore City are identical, or least very similar. In addition to statewide Sunday Hunting, this bill establishes an identical 50-yard safety zone for archery hunters in every county. The decision on a safe distance for archery hunters should be predicated on a variety of factors including, but not limited to, the density of the housing units, the schools in that area, the wildlife living in that county, and more, such that allowing archery hunting does not pose a hazard to residents of that county.

Maryland's 23 counties and Baltimore City have diverse topography, wildlife, and human populations. While we agree that Maryland's current hodgepodge of Sunday hunting laws, which vary County by County, creates confusion for residents, these issues cannot be determined arbitrarily in a manner that imposes one set of rules on the entire state

We would welcome an inclusive stakeholder process to create more consistent Sunday hunting (and archery) laws across Maryland. But that process would need to account for existing Sunday hunting restrictions and recognize the limitations determined by the various Counties, not strike all existing Sunday hunting laws completely.

Regional preferences and differences exist that impact the needs of constituents regarding hunting issues in their own backyards. This issue should not be mandated in a statewide one-size-fits-all bill.

I respectfully ask that this committee give an unfavorable vote to HB 1279.