

Written testimony Senate Bill 155 Luke Muldoon.pdf

Uploaded by: Charles Rodney

Position: FAV

Submission by:
Luke Muldoon
Lukemuldoon2@gmail.com
240.304.2484

March 7, 2023

Education, Environment and Energy Committee
Attn: Brian J. Feldman, Chair

RE: Senate Bill 155 – Prince George’s County – Natural Resources – Sunday Deer
Hunting and Archery Hunting Safety Zones

Dear Chairman Feldman and Committee Members:

I am writing this letter in support of Senate Bill 155, which as introduced, authorizes hunting deer on private property in Prince George’s County on certain Sundays during the approved hunting season, and includes a 50-year archery hunting safety zone authorization.

This Bill will help control whitetail deer populations in Prince George’s County. A high deer population results in an increase in the number of vehicular collisions, damaged crops and landscapes, and documented medical cases of Lyme disease.

Hunters are a managing tool for wildlife populations. However, this management is impossible without opportunity. Hunters, just like anyone else, have obligations that limit their hunting opportunity. Sunday falls on which might be for many, the only day of the week to spend outdoors. From a recreational perspective, hunters use this tradition as a total system reboot. For most, it is therapeutic. Lastly, other Maryland counties have already demonstrated that hunting on Sunday’s is a safe and effective wildlife management tool.

In Prince George’s County, the natural environment for wildlife is constantly changing. This results in deer adapting to live in close quarters with people. Deer have thus overpopulated certain areas where hunting is restricted by a 150-yard safety bubble around inhabited structures. It is here, through the whitetail deer’s adaptation to the urban environment, that vehicular collisions are much more frequent and residential landscapes are destroyed. These are the areas where archery hunting within 50 yards of a structure, as again several other counties in Maryland have already proved, can be a safe and effective means of controlling the deer herd and providing opportunity for hunters who are granted permission to hunt by private property landowners.

Hunting in all forms contributes to the economy as hunters purchase hunting gear, clothes, trucks, ATVs and boats, which in turn increases revenue for small businesses. Residential owners avoid unrecoverable loss to their landscapes and the struggling farming community benefits since farmers suffer less crop damage.

Thank you for your time and consideration of Senate Bill No. 155 as introduced. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 240-304-2484.

Sincerely,

Luke Muldoon

Luke Muldoon
Lukemuldoon2@gmail.com
240.304.2484

Support of SB 155 - Prince George's County - Natur

Uploaded by: Colby Ferguson

Position: FAV



Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

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

March 8, 2023

To: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: **Support of SB 155 - Prince George's County - Natural Resources - Sunday Deer Hunting and Archery Hunting Safety Zones**

On behalf of our Prince George's County Farm Bureau member families, I submit this written testimony in support of SB 155, legislation that authorizes the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to allow, in Prince George's County, a person to hunt deer on each Sunday of the deer hunting seasons from the first Sunday in October through the second Sunday in January, inclusive. The bill also decreases the archery hunting safety zone in Prince George's County from 150 yards to 50 yards from a dwelling house, residence, church, or any other building or camp occupied by human beings.

Crop damage created by deer is nearly \$50 per acre today. These numbers are even higher in Southern Maryland. DNR reports show that more than 10% of the deer harvested this hunting season were done on Sundays. Opening Prince George's County to have these additional Sunday hunting dates will allow the hunters to help address the overpopulation of deer in Prince George's County.

MDFB Policy: We support statewide Sunday hunting on private lands.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 155 & REQUESTS A FAVORABLE REPORT

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colby Ferguson". The signature is stylized and includes a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Colby Ferguson
Director of Government Relations

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

SB 155 - Written Testimony from NSSF in Support of

Uploaded by: John Pica

Position: FAV



TREVOR W. SANTOS

Director, Government Relations - State Affairs

tsantos@nssf.org | 202-220-1340 x205 | nssf.org

March 6, 2023

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Senate Education, Health and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

**SENATE BILL 155
SUPPORT**

Re: Senate Bill 155 – Prince George’s County - Natural Resources - Sunday Hunting

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee:

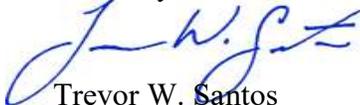
On behalf of the National Shooting Sports Foundation (“NSSF”), I submit these comments in support for Senate Bill 155 (“SB 155”) by Senator Jackson. SB 155 would authorize the Department of Natural Resources to allow a person to hunt deer on each Sunday of the deer hunting season from the first Sunday in October through the second Sunday in January, inclusive, in Prince George's County.

As the trade association for America’s firearms, ammunition, hunting, and recreational shooting sports industry, NSSF seeks to promote, protect, and preserve hunting and the shooting sports. We have a membership of thousands of manufacturers, distributors, firearms retailers, and shooting ranges. Our manufacturer members make the firearms used by law-abiding Maryland sportsmen and women, the U.S. military, and law enforcement agencies throughout the state.

This important piece of legislation will expand current Sunday hunting opportunities for sportsmen, women, and children in Prince George’s County. Sunday hunting is an excellent vehicle to recruit new hunter-conservationists. Hunting, fishing, and other forms of outdoor recreation have proven physical, psychological, and educational benefits for our nation’s young people. Due to the greater prevalence of academic, athletic, and other competing activities that take place on Saturday, it is likely that allowing Sunday hunting will more than double the number of days children can hunt.

The passage of Senate Bill 155 will help ensure Maryland’s strong hunting heritage can be enjoyed and passed on to future generations of hunters and conservationists, and it is for these reasons that the National Shooting Sports Foundation supports the passage of Senator Jackson’s Senate Bill 155.

Sincerely,



Trevor W. Santos

23 MGPA_SB155PrinceGeorgesHunting.pdf

Uploaded by: Lindsay Thompson

Position: FAV



Maryland Grain Producers Association
210 Fallen Horse Circle, Suite 100, Queenstown, MD 21658
Lindsay.mdag@gmail.com (p) 443-262-8491
www.marylandgrain.com

Date: March 8, 2023

Senate Bill 155 - Prince George's County - Natural Resources - Sunday Deer Hunting and Archery Hunting Safety Zones

Committee: Education, Energy and Environment

MGPA Position: SUPPORT

The Maryland Grain Producers Association (MGPA) serves as the voice of grain farmers growing corn, wheat, barley and sorghum across the state. MGPA supports Senate Bill 155 which authorizes the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to allow hunting on Sundays in Prince George's County for game birds and mammals on private property. The bill also decreases the archery hunting "safety zone" in Prince George's County from 150 yards to 50 yards.

The National Agricultural Statistics Service estimates that farmers experience over \$10 million in crop damage annually with 75% of that being attributed to deer. Maryland's deer population was estimated to be just over 200,000 white-tailed deer in 2022. There is 34,399 acres of farmland in production in Prince George's County and the value of grain grown is \$4.35M.

Other counties that currently have the 50 yard archery safety zone are Allegany, Calvert, Carroll, Cecil, Frederick, Garrett, Harford, Montgomery, St. Mary's, and Washington counties. DNR releases a report of hunting accidents and there have been no archery accidents when an arrow injured a non-intended target besides those self-inflicted by hunters falling on their bow. In areas of higher density development like Prince George's County, decreasing the archery safety zone would be beneficial for hunting opportunity.

MGPA respectfully requests your favorable report on Senate Bill 155.

SB 155_mgoldstein_fav 2023.pdf

Uploaded by: Mathew Goldstein

Position: FAV



March 08, 2023

SB 155 - SUPPORT

Prince George's County - Natural Resources - Sunday Deer Hunting and Archery Hunting Safety Zone

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

Maryland bans, or otherwise limits, the sale of automobiles and other vehicles (Business Regulation Code Ann. §18-101), and the sale of alcohol (Alcoholic Beverages Code Ann. §11-102), on Sundays. Financial institutions must be closed on Sunday (Financial Institutions Code Ann. §5-704). Maryland is one of eleven states where hunting is still banned or otherwise restricted on Sunday (Natural Resources Code Ann. §10-410). Counties (and Baltimore) have requested, and usually obtained, a variety of exemptions from some of these Sunday activity restrictions from the General Assembly. Secular Maryland supports these requests to reduce or eliminate Sunday activity restrictions. We disagree with the state level Sunday activity restriction defaults.

Sunday is a special day of the week for many Christians. For other citizens the day of rest and worship may be Friday or Saturday, and for some citizens there is no god to worship or no fixed day of rest each week. Maryland law can be, and should be, more accommodating to this diversity of belief among its citizens. Legally banning business and leisure activity on Sundays favors a majority religious practice. Favoring a majority religious practice is not a proper goal of the laws. To the fullest extent feasible, our laws should confer equal accommodations to minority religious practices along with non-religious and anti-religion beliefs.

The decisions regarding which day to hunt, to buy or sell alcohol, to buy or sell vehicles, to initiate and process financial transactions, etc., are best left to the citizens. State lawmakers can require one day off every week without specifying a particular day of the week by delegating that decision to the affected businesses. Hunting restrictions to accommodate horseback riding, hiking, and the like during the hunting season can be defined for particular hours throughout the week or rotated to different days for each week of the month instead of being on every Sunday.

Respectfully,
Mathew Goldstein
3838 Early Glow Ln
Bowie, MD

Jackson2023SB155RevisedTestimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Michael Jackson

Position: FAV

MICHAEL A. JACKSON
Legislative District 27
Calvert, Charles and
Prince George's Counties



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Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees

Chair, Pensions

Public Safety, Transportation, and
Environment

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

District Office
250 Merrimac Court
Prince Frederick, Maryland 20678

TESTIMONY - SENATE BILL 155

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY – NATURAL RESOURCES – SUNDAY DEER HUNTING AND ARCHERY HUNTING SAFETY ZONES

EDUCATION, ENERGY, & THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MARCH 9, 2023

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and Committee Members:

Senate Bill 155 is a very straightforward bill that (with the amendment before you from the Prince George's County Senate Delegation) simply adds legislative districts 26 and 27 to the group of over 20 counties that allow Sunday deer hunting. Additionally, it reduces the required safety distance for archery hunters from 150 yards to 50 yards (from a dwelling house, residence, church, or any other building or camp occupied by human beings).

Existing Sunday hunting laws, and archery hunting restrictions, in Southern Prince George's County are a significant restriction on the ability to properly manage the local deer herd and this legislation would allow this region a better means of resolving the related difficulties and associated traffic safety issues that it currently faces.

For the reasons listed above, I ask for a favorable report of Senate Bill 155.



SB0155/653025/1

AMENDMENTS
PREPARED
BY THE
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE
SERVICES

02 MAR 23
09:52:06

BY: Prince George's County Senators
(To be offered in the Education, Energy, and the Environment
Committee)

AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL 155
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in line 5, after “in” insert “certain legislative districts in”; in line 6, after “adding” insert “certain legislative districts in”; and in the same line, strike “counties” and substitute “areas”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 3, in line 11, after “(III)” insert “THE 26TH AND 27TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS IN”.

On page 6, in line 20, after the first “County,” insert “THE 26TH AND 27TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS IN”.

MICHAEL A. JACKSON
CHAIR

RON WATSON
VICE CHAIR



MALCOLM AUGUSTINE
JOANNE C. BENSON
MELONY GRIFFITH
C. ANTHONY MUSE
JIM ROSAPEPE
ALONZO T. WASHINGTON

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY SENATE DELEGATION

March 2, 2023

Senator Brian Feldman, Chair
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2W Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Feldman,

Please let this letter serve as official notice of the unanimous vote (8-0) of the Prince George's County Senate Delegation in support of Senate Bill 155 (Natural Resources Sunday Deer Hunting and Archery Safety Zones – Prince George's County) with the attached amendment to limit the bill to legislative districts 26 and 27 in Southern Prince George's County.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Senator Michael A. Jackson, Chair
Prince George's County Senate Delegation

Chesapeake PWH Testimony March 8 in OPPOSITION to

Uploaded by: Jacquie cowan

Position: UNF



Riding To a Different Beat

WRITTEN and ORAL TESTIMONY OPPOSED to ALL HUNTING on SUNDAYS

March 8, 2023 in the Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee

SB 0155 Prince George County

SB 0323 Calvert County

SB 0777 Mid-Shore

SB 0796 Wicomico County

SB 0824 Worcester County

The Chesapeake Plantation Walking Horse Club is an equestrian trail riding organization who has opposed all efforts to open Sundays for hunting. Because most of our average 300 Maryland family memberships work, go to school, and have other weekday obligations, our organized Club rides are held on the weekends. When all Sundays were preserved for non-hunting activities we held our rides on Sundays during hunting season out of respect to the hunters and to be safe. The continued efforts to add more species, seasons and Sundays are making it more and more difficult for us to safely hold our Club events. We are just one of many more riding, hiking, biking and other interest clubs.

I do want to be clear ... we are not opposed to hunting, just the unequitable establishment of more hunting opportunities that directly impacts others' right to pursue their own outdoor activities in a safe and peaceful environment.

Our rides average 15 miles covering a lot of trails and territory. We now have to find areas that we can be sure are not hunted; but even the popular park perimeter trails do not fulfill this safety need because they border private lands being hunted. Public access trails criss-cross woods and fields that may be hunted. Unless there are signs posted "Hunting Today", how do we know where is safe and where is not? Some Counties, like Anne Arundel, offer very few public equestrian trails so we depend on networks of private land trails.

Many of Maryland's trail riders do not own trailers or have time to leave their boarding facilities to take a ride.

They depend on safe access to the area around their facilities to exercise and enjoy their horses. Facilities that cannot offer this can lose their clients and income. One such operation I know has lost 85% of their boarders.

Trail horses are not "born" ... they are trained through hours and years of exposure and practice — not in the arena, but in the woods and fields. Like human athletes, horses must be conditioned. The possibility of hunting 7 days a week it is becoming harder to find the time and safety for training.

Farmers do not need Sundays to protect their crops. They can do so throughout the year by acquiring a Deer Management Permit (DMP) from the Department of Natural Resources.

There are many more negative experiences and accidents than are shown in reports. Our Club was riding the C&O Canal where hunting is not allowed. Hunters in a field adjacent to the Tow Path fired shots purposely over our heads. My neighbor's bedroom window was shattered in the middle of the night by a poacher illegally hunting the neighboring hay field without permission, again reported to County Police. Both these instances were reported to the County Police, but may not have been forwarded on to the Department of Natural Resources for recording.

— continued —

The Chesapeake Plantation Walking Horse Club welcomes enthusiasts of all breeds and riding disciplines to join in our fun. Membership benefits include Monthly Trail Rides * Friendly Help * Camping * Clinics * Good Friends and Community.

Proud member the Maryland Horse Council * National Walking Horse Association * Friends of the Sound Horse



Not all waterfowl are hunted from blinds and boats. Pictured here are geese being hunted in the open fields. This looks very much like Wye Island NRMA , also a popular area for trail riding, biking and hiking the same fields. Similar fields border other public lands like Cedarville State Forest, Rosaryville and Tuckahoe State Parks.

Let me address the specific bills before you today:

SB 0155 ... Prince George's County ... intends to open all 16 Sundays for deer hunting from October through mid January. In past years your Prince George Representatives have not accepted previous efforts to open Sundays to hunting and preserved Sundays for their non-hunting constituents to enjoy the County's beautiful outdoors.

SB 0323 ... Calvert County ... intends to repeal the previous agreement struck to end hunting on all Sundays for all species at 10:30am giving the greater non-hunting population the chance to engage in their outdoor past times safely in peace and quiet, which could simply be a family picnic in their own backyard.

SB 0777 ... Mid-Shore ... also intends to repeal the 10:30 statute in Caroline, Dorchester, Talbot and Wicomico Counties for all species on all Sundays. This means hunting 7 days a week pretty much all year. When do the non-hunting families get to pursue their outdoor hobbies?

SB 0796 ... Wicomico County ... will allow hunting of all species on all Sundays on both private and public lands. Once again, when will trail riders and other non-hunters be able to experience the safe and beautiful quiet outdoors?

SB 0824 ... Worcester County ... will also allow hunting of all species on all Sundays on both private and public lands.

Please understand — we are not standing in opposition to hunting — what we are pleading for is time to pursue our passions as well. Most of Maryland's trails are considered "Shared Use" with hikers, bikers, and equestrians enjoying together and respectfully. Where is the equity for all Marylanders if these bills pass and take away the one day that used to be reserved for the greater non-hunting families and Clubs?

I will finish up here with 2 questions for you:

1- Why should just 2% of the Maryland population receive special consideration to hunt 7 days a week?

2- Would you take your children, grand children or dog for a walk in the woods if there might be hunting?

Thank you for your attention and consideration. As you make your decisions on these bills, please keep in mind your entire constituency, most of whom do not hunt and would prefer to spend their outdoor time in peace and safety. I am more than happy to answer any questions and provide more information as you may wish.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jacquie Cowan

410-215-4979 jacquiecowan@comcast.net

hunting accident report 2007-2021.pages.pdf

Uploaded by: Jane Seigler

Position: UNF

Excerpts from 15 years of DNR's Annual Hunting Accident Reports

<https://dnr.maryland.gov/nrp/pages/hunting-incident-reports.aspx>

2021

— A 58-year old Washington County Deer Hunter (Firearms Season) was actively hunting in a wooded area when they were struck in the thigh with a round from another firearm. NRP investigation revealed that the victim was shot in the thigh by a 10-year old relative in their hunting party who had mistaken the victim for game. Victim was transported to the hospital for non-life threatening injuries. No charges were filed against the shooter.

2020

--- A Frederick County resident observed damage to the exterior of their residence, which was consistent with that of pellet strikes from a shotgun. While investigating officers located no hunting activity in the area, the incident did occur during the end of spring turkey season. No further suspect / hunter information was developed throughout the investigation.

— A Kent County resident observed damage to their vehicle's windshield, which was consistent with that of pellet strikes from a shotgun. Nearby waterfowl hunters were interviewed and denied any involvement, which was confirmed through an on-scene investigation. The area in question is known for waterfowl hunting and there were reports of numerous shots leading up to the incident. No further suspect / hunter information was developed throughout the investigation.

— A Kent County waterfowl hunter, returning from a hunt, observed damage to their parked vehicle's tailgate, which consisted of a rifle round lodged into the plastic molding of said tailgate. Nearby waterfowl hunters were interviewed and denied any involvement, which was confirmed through an on-scene investigation. The area in question is known for waterfowl hunting. No further suspect / hunter information was developed throughout the investigation.

— A 17 year-old Wicomico County Waterfowl Hunter was underway in a vessel with other hunters when they were struck with shotgun pellets. Investigation revealed that other members of the victim's hunting party were on shore and approximately 50-60 yards away when a 20 year-old fired a shot towards the victim's vessel in an alleged attempt to scare him and his hunting party. The victim sustained non-life threatening injuries. Natural resources / criminal charges were filed against the shooter in this incident.

— A 14 year-old Somerset County Turkey Hunter (Firearms - Junior Hunt Days) was on foot and stalking turkeys with other juvenile hunters and under adult supervision. As the juveniles were walking 50-70 yards apart, under thick tree cover and out of sight from one another, a 14-year old shooter observed a turkey and fired their shotgun twice at said game. As a result, shotgun pellets ultimately struck the victim. The shooter was not aware that the victim was in the background. The victim sustained non-life threatening injuries.

2019

---- A 61-year-old Washington County Woodchuck Hunter was shooting from the front of their residence off a picnic table for support when one shot went errant and struck a person fishing at an adjacent pond, grazing

their shoulder. The victim was approximately two tenths of a mile away obscured by heavy brush and tree cover. Rimfire .22 long rifle ammunition from a rifle was the implement used.

--- An unknown Washington County Deer Hunter (Archery season) shot a crossbow bolt through a Honda SUV while it was parked in the victims driveway. Apparently the shot took place after sunset the evening before the damage was observed. Deer frequent the lawn of this residence and other residences within the neighborhood most evenings. No suspect(s) were observed at the time of the damage.

---- A Montgomery County residence received a broken window caused by a stray bullet fired from a rifle. The projectile was recovered on scene lodged in between two plates of glass. No suspects at the time of the shooting but several shots were reported just before the window received damage.

2018

No relevant reports

2017

--- A 26 year old Talbot County deer hunter (firearms season) shot at two deer with 12 gauge shotgun slugs. The first deer was struck and ran 40 yards before collapsing, the second deer was shot at but the first slug went over its back, the second shot dropped the deer in the location where it was standing. Apparently the slug that missed struck an occupied residence just to one side of the front door. Upon a 911 call a sheriff's department deputy had searched and located the lone hunter. After an investigation by NRP the hunter was charged with negligent hunting and discharging a firearm within the safety zone. Property damage only

--- An unknown Carroll County deer hunter (firearms season) sent a 7mm projectile through the side of a residence, through the bedroom wall, through a wooden dresser, then through a closet wall before coming to rest in a pile of towels in the closet. Two people were in the bedroom at the time but neither was injured. A search of nearby farms was unsuccessful in locating any hunter(s). Property damage only

--- A 52 year old Cecil County deer hunter (late firearms season) took two shots at a deer with a 30/30 rifle toward the direction of a neighboring farm. One of the shots (both of which missed the deer) struck a dining room window of the adjacent residence and stopped, being found on the windowsill. During the investigation it was determined that the round that struck the window had ricocheted off of the ground. The distance from the shooter to the house was 398 yards.

(DNR's on-line annual report for 2017 is identical to DNR'S 2016's report – the 2016 appears to be missing)

2015

--- A 16 year old Allegany County turkey hunter fired two (2) shots from a 12 gauge shotgun at what they believed to be the white head of a spring gobbler. The shot traveled approximately 53 yards and struck a 70 year old camouflaged turkey hunter in the face. This hunter had walked into the woods, sat down and was listening for turkey's completely camouflaged except for the side of his face which is what the shooter was observing and mistook for a turkey. Non-Fatal

2014

--- A 50 year old Carroll County Fox Hunter sent a 6mm rifle round through a patio glass door. The round went through a vinyl garden hose and a plastic lawn chair before going through the door and striking a kitchen chair. The homeowner was the only occupant in the residence at the time and they were in bed sleeping.

--- A 52 year old Kent County Turkey Hunter (Spring Season) took two shots at a gobbler out in an open field. The second shot was at the bird while in flight. One pellet struck the storm door of an adjacent house causing the glass to shatter. The homeowner was present in the home at the time.

2013

--- A 47 year old Calvert County rabbit hunter received a gunshot (shotgun) wound to his body/thigh/head when he was shot by a 15 year old hunting partner. A party of 4 was hunting with the aid of a dog when a rabbit ran between the men who were approximately 40 yards apart. The shooter stated that he could not see the other hunter when he shot at the rabbit

--- A 52 year old Charles County deer hunter shot his 22 year old son with a rifle across an open field. The shooter and the victim had been hunting together and at dusk the shooter fired out at movement in the field which he mistook for a deer. was walking through the field prior to ending the hunt and returning to the vehicles.

--- A 28 year old Charles County deer hunter while hunting within the safety zone ---discharged his shotgun resulting in the rifled slug passing through a window of the residence striking a chandelier in the dining room and becoming embedded in a wall. Thankfully the residence was vacant at the time of the incident.

--- A rifle round was recovered from a Frederick County home during the second day of the extended fire arms deer season. The round went through the wall of the home and struck a sliding glass door causing it to shatter. The round was recovered at the scene by the sheriff's department. The nearest wooded area was over 400 yards away. Property Damage Only

--- A rifle round was recovered from a "second" Frederick County home during the extended firearms deer season. The round entered through the front wall of the residence blew out the drywall in the living room at which time the bullet came to rest on the floor and was recovered by the homeowner. The bullet was a full metal jacket round (illegal to use on big game)

2012

--- A 62 year old Harford County landowner was struck by a random shot on their property. Upon investigation it was determined the landowner had been hearing a volley of shots repeatedly behind her home. As she and her husband went outside to investigate, a piece of shot struck her in the left forearm. Law enforcement responded and never found hunters in the area. The landowners advised no one had permission to be there, therefore trespassers were suspected to be the shooters. No suspects were located nor arrests made. The victim suffered a very minor wound to her forearm. Non Fatal.

--- A home in Dorchester County was struck by a projectile: Upon investigation it was determined the homeowner heard shots and found a French door in the back of their home was shattered due a projectile striking the lower left hand pane. The area behind the home is a public hunting area. No suspects were ever located. It was also never determined hunters caused this situation.

2011

--- A 41 year old Carroll County woman was struck in the right leg by a stray projectile while she was in her back yard. Upon investigation it was determined two individuals were plinking and shooting at squirrels & birds with a .22 cal. rifle in a wooded area behind her residence. Due to an unsafe backstop, it was determined their projectile traveled approximately .26 miles to the victim's property causing the leg injury. Squirrel season was closed at the time of this incident. Charges pending. Non fatal.

--- A 57 year old Dorchester County deer hunter shot his 57 year old hunting companion who he had mistaken for a deer: Upon investigation it was determined the shooter and victim had split up to hunt deer. Both hunters were wearing fluorescent orange when they departed each others company. The shooter had gone approximately 95 yards to his stand, climbed into it and began to hunt deer. The shooter observed a dark movement coming towards his location. The shooter was using a .30-06 scoped rifle. The shooter advised he determined he was shooting at a deer by looking through his scope, and shot at center mass.

--- A 48 year old Caroline County deer hunter shot his 46 year old hunting companion that he had mistaken for a deer: Upon investigation it was determined the shooter heard a disturbance of brush and saw movement, thinking it was a deer. The shooter fired a crossbow bolt at the movement at a distance of 62 yards, striking the victim in his left tibia. The time of the incident was four minutes after legal shooting hours. The shooter was charged with Negligent Hunting. Non Fatal.

--- A 16 year old Dorchester County deer hunter shot his 19 year old hunting companion while shooting at a running deer: Upon investigation 8 hunters had organized a deer drive in a marshy dense wooded area. 5 hunters were pushing deer while 3 were standers. As a deer passed between two standers, the shooter shot at a running deer, striking his hunting companion in both femurs with a .12 ga. shotgun using #4 buckshot at a distance of 60 yards. The shooter advised he never saw the victim. Both hunters were wearing daylight fluorescent orange. Non Fatal.

--- A 56 year old Dorchester County turkey hunter shot his 36 year old hunting companion, mistaking him for game: Upon investigation it was determined the two hunters entered their hunting area and posted three turkey decoys in an open field. They then split up to hunt the area and the shooter advised he did not see which direction the victim went. After a period of time the shooter saw three turkeys to the right of the decoys 40 yards away. The shooter advised he could not see the birds at all times. After an hour he called his companion on a cell phone to ask him if he saw the birds. Immediately after their conversation, the shooter saw a movement then shot. He had shot his hunting companion. The movement he saw was the victim putting his cell phone away. The victim was shot at a distance of 38 yards. The victim received 24 #4 shotgun pellets which were fired from the shooters 12 .ga shotgun. The victim was struck in the right side of his body receiving wounds in his head, neck, shoulder, torso, calf, knee, and ankle. The shooter was charged with Negligent Hunting. Non Fatal.

--- A 13 year old Dorchester County deer hunter, while shooting at a deer, struck a home in the background: Upon investigation the shooter discharged a .45 cal. muzzleloader at a deer 6 minutes after legal shooting hours. The projectile, missing the deer, traveled 242 yards striking a house 48 inches from the ground. As the projectile entered the house, it penetrated exterior and interior walls and lodged in a recliner. A resident in the home was sitting in the chair at the time and received a redmark on their shoulder where the projectile stopped on impact. Non Fatal

2010

--- During the 2010 Firearm Deer Season, residents of a home located in the area of Walkersville (Frederick County), reported their house had been struck by a projectile: Upon investigation it was determined the home had been struck by a projectile doing damage to the exterior & interior walls. Interviews were conducted with seven hunters who were in the vicinity of the area the day before hunting deer as regarding their actions that

day. It was never determined who may have been the shooter, but one scenario did reveal a hunter had fired a .30.30 rifle at a deer pointed in the direction that the home approximately 3,940 feet away. No evidence was found to support charges. Non Fatal.

--- A 45 year old Frederick County deer hunter, while shooting at a deer, struck a home in the background: Upon investigation the shooter had discharged a .12 gauge shotgun using slugs at a herd of deer. The gun jammed, the shooter cleared the gun, turned and shot at another deer in the direction of the home. The shooter advised he had become disoriented as to the direction he was shooting. The slug entered the home at a distance of 114 yards, traveled through the exterior and two interior walls, through two rooms, and into appliances and home furnishings. No one was in the home at the time of the incident. The shooter was charged with Negligent Hunting and Hunting within 150 yards of a dwelling (Safety Zone). Non Fatal.

--- A 53 year old Howard County deer hunter was shot by his 36 year old hunting companion. The shooter shot at a standing deer with a .12 gauge slug in an open field at approximately 243 yards. The bullet missed the deer, striking the victim sitting in a wooden ground blind at the opposite end of the field. The victim received injuries to his right arm and hand. Non Fatal. Charges pending an investigation

--- A 46 year old Queen Anne's County deer hunting was shot by his 25 year old hunting companion. With both subjects participating in a deer drive, the shooter shot at a running deer twice with a .20 gauge shotgun slug. A slug traveled 70 yards, striking the victim positioned at the opposite end of the field in the left leg. Non Fatal. Negligent Hunting charges pending.

--- A 55 year old Dorchester County rabbit hunter was shot by his 55 year old hunting companion. The shooter shot at a running rabbit with a .20 gauge shotgun in a thicket. The shot pellets traveled approximately 30 to 40 feet through the thicket striking the victim. The victim received injuries to the right side of his head, neck, eye, arm and left

--- A Frederick County garage window was struck by a bullet from an unknown source. An investigation could not recover the projectile nor related evidence. This incident occurred during the firearm's deer season.

2009

--- A 57 year-old goose hunter in Kent County was shot by another hunter while attempting to retrieve a wounded goose. The victim received a minor wound to the face from a shotgun pellet which deflected off the water striking the victim.

--- A window was broken at an occupied daycare facility from a slug fired by a shotgun in Howard County. Several hunters were found in the area and interviewed by several police agencies. Negligent hunting charges were filed, but the States Attorney elected not to prosecute due to insufficient evidence.

--- A window in a house was struck and broken by a sabot round fired by a deer hunter in Talbot County. The investigation found that in this case , the hunter was not negligent and charges were not filed.

--- While checking vacant buildings, several Frederick County Sheriff Deputy vehicles were struck by shot gun pellets causing minor damage. Several individuals who were hunting quail in the area were located and charges were filed by the States Attorney's office for Reckless Endangerment.

--- A 69 year-old deer hunter in Dorchester County found himself in the middle of a deer drive on a wildlife refuge. After hearing several shots the hunter realized that his shotgun had been struck on the barrel and magazine by lead shot. The shooter was never found or located.

2008

— A 47 year-old Allegany County deer hunter, walking into the woods without hunter orange, was shot by a 32 year-old hunter. The shooter heard noise, saw movement through the trees and shot the victim without identifying the target. Fatal.

— A 40 year-old Talbot County goose hunter was shot by his hunting partner when the shooter, from outside the blind, shot at a wounded goose. The victim in the blind was in the line of fire. One pellet entered his eye and lodged in his brain. Non-fatal.

— A 64 year-old Garrett County deer hunter was shot in the abdomen by another hunter who mistook the victim for a deer. Shooter was charged with negligent hunting. Non-fatal.

2007

— A 51 year-old Caroline County quail hunter shot his hunting partner when a quail flew between them. The victim received 4 pellets to his upper body.

— A 54 year-old Talbot County deer hunter was shot by his hunting partner when a deer ran between them and the shooter shot at the deer. The shooter hit the deer and shrapnel from the slug hit the victim in the hand causing minor injuries.

— A 59 year-old Queen Anne's County deer hunter was shot by his hunting partner when a deer ran between them. The victim was below field level, climbing a hill out of site of the shooter. He received neck injuries.

— A 38 year-old Garrett County deer hunter was shot in the shoulder by his 16 year-old hunting partner when the victim was moving through bushes and mistaken for game. Victim was not wearing fluorescent orange.

— A 64 year-old Charles County Turkey hunter was shot by his hunting partner when the victim started to retrieve a turkey and was mistaken for another turkey by the shooter. Victim received 4 pellet wounds to various parts of the body.

INCIDENTS -- NOT REPORTED IN DNR ACCIDENT REPORTS (2016 to present)– that were recorded in other news sources:

--- MD: Woman attempting to shoot groundhog accidentally hits man fishing at park

May 28, 2019

The Maryland Natural Resource Police are investigating an incident of a bullet that grazed a man in the shoulder on Sunday afternoon.

According to police, a 61-year-old woman was shooting a groundhog in her backyard, which borders the Smithsburg Lions Community Park.

The woman missed and the bullet ricocheted across the water and struck a 28-year-old man who was fishing.

Officials said there doesn't seem to be any issues with limitation, however the shooter is responsible for anything in background, like in this case, the park....

--- Fatality : Maryland Natural Resources police were investigating a fatal hunting accident in Frederick County on Saturday, the opening day of deer season for firearms. Police said the rifle of a first-time hunter from Altadena, Calif., was accidentally discharged while he was deer hunting on private property on Eylers Valley Flint Road near Thurmont. Police identified the victim as Vincent Cavallo, 32.

Cavallo and his uncle were hunting in separate areas of the property when the uncle heard a gunshot. He went to check on his nephew and found him dead, DNR police spokeswoman Candy Thomson said. Police were called to the scene at 9:24 a.m.

Police said the victim is believed to have slipped or dropped the gun and it discharged, hitting him in the head. His body was taken to the medical examiner's office. Natural Resources police were assisted by the Frederick County Sheriff's Department in the investigation.

lorraine.mirabella@baltsun.com

--- Author: Scott Broom

Published: 6:07 PM EDT October 24, 2016

The mystery is still not solved after an 87-year old man was apparently struck (ed. note: in the head) by a shotgun pellet or bullet fragment while walking on his property in rural Montgomery County Saturday. Authorities suspect a hunting accident, but they don't know who fired the shot or from where. Residents and hunters say they are deeply concerned by the incident. The victim's property is on the boundary of the Patuxent River State Park where hunting with firearms is permitted. Hunters may not fire guns within 150 yards of an occupied dwelling without a residents' permission, even if the hunter is on another property or public land nearby. Maryland averages 2-3 hunting accidents involving firearms annually. The victim is almost always a hunter.

NOTE: see more of this episode at:

https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/man-87-in-marylands-montgomery-county-struck-by-a-small-metallic-projectile/2016/10/22/bc0e5974-98c8-11e6-bc79-af1cd3d2984b_story.html

<https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.wusa9.com/amp/article/news/local/mystery-surrounds-shooting-of-elderly-md-man-walking-home/65-340868641>

--- Fatality: Oct 11, 2015 - WASHINGTON — A 75-year-old huntsman was fatally *shot during* a hunting trip Saturday in Queen Anne's County, ... *Marvin Bowen Coppage*, a resident of *Henderson*, was hired to lead a guided *pheasant and chukar* hunt.

--- 2014 A mountain biker was peppered by bird shot while riding his bike in the Tuckahoe State Park on Maryland's Eastern (related by Tuckahoe park staff) knowledge)

Citizen report:

Date: March 15, 2019 at 9:15:38 AM EDT

To: <mwc.dnr@maryland.gov>, <animalcontrol@howardcountymd.gov>, <hcpdcrimetips@howardcountymd.gov>

Subject: Hunting Violation in Western Howard County

Hello,

I want to report a hunting violation that I encountered yesterday afternoon between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. in the Woodbine parcel of the Patuxent State Park.

I was in the park on horseback and one or two people began shooting firearms near the trail head that is immediately north of the farm at 4505 Jennings Chapel Road.

I hollered several times so that they could hear that I was there and stop shooting long enough for me to get out of the park. They were shooting between me and the closest way out of the park so my way was totally blocked.

They did not stop shooting even as I hollered and eventually my very sane and experienced horse bolted to try to get away from the noise, which was echoing everywhere.

Luckily I am a strong rider and I did not have a mishap but my horse was badly frightened, as was I, frankly. It was mainly luck that we did not run into a tree or barbed wire or worse.

Once I finally got to the trail head – after picking my way along as close to the edge of the park as I possibly could on the theory they would not fire towards residences – I saw their vehicles and got their license plates. They were both Maryland vehicles, one was 5CC8856 and the other was 5C74853.

I have attached photographs of the vehicles. I also have a photograph of my riding attire yesterday, which included a safety orange saddle pad and a reflective yellow jacket, which I can provide if necessary.

I have been riding in this part of the park for over 15 years and every time I have encountered hunters we have been courteous to one another and respectful of each other's sport and mindful of each other's safety. These people were obviously an exception.

I am happy to discuss further by telephone if necessary.

testimony - Sunday hunting - Prince george's.pages

Uploaded by: Jane Seigler

Position: UNF



MARYLAND
HORSE
COUNCIL

P.O. Box 606 | Lisbon, Maryland 21797
www.mdhorsecouncil.org

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

In the Senate Education, Energy & the Environment Committee, March 8, 2023

Testimony of the Maryland Horse Council on SB 155

Prince George's County - Natural Resources - Sunday Deer Hunting
and Archery Hunting Safety Zones - UNFAVORABLE

The Maryland Horse Council (MHC) is a membership-based trade association that represents the state-wide horse industry in Maryland. Our members include horse farms; horse related businesses; equestrian competitors; trainers; individual enthusiasts; equine-assisted therapy programs; and breed, interest, and discipline associations. We represent over 30,000 Marylanders who make their living with horses, or who just own and love them.

- **A majority of Marylanders oppose Sunday hunting.** An independent statewide poll conducted by Gonzales Research and Media Services in 2018 found that 68.9% of respondents oppose Sunday hunting. Even DNR's own 2018 commissioned survey found that a majority of the general population does not favor Sunday hunting and does not want to see it expanded.¹
- **This bill would allow Sunday hunting in Prince George's for the first time ever, on every Sunday in October, November, December and half of January.**
- **This bill would infringe on the rights of the general public to enjoy outdoor recreation, the importance of which has received increased attention, including the new Office of Outdoor Recreation in DNR, and the passage of the Great Maryland Outdoors Act last year. 78% of the Gonzales poll respondents said they would decide to alter their recreational plans to avoid hunters. In a Maryland Horse Council 2016 poll, 85% of respondents said they changed their schedules or riding locations to avoid encountering hunters.**
- **Since the advent of the pandemic, widespread use of outdoor recreation and natural resources by the general public has increased.** For example, attendance at Maryland State

¹ https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Documents/2018_DeerPublicOpinionSurvey.pdf

Parks in 2020 increased 45% over 2019, which was also a record year.² Demand has remained strong. **Many of these new users are unfamiliar with the rules of hunting and hunting seasons, including the distinctions between private and public lands. Now is not the time to increase general public exposure to possible hunting risks, or to further deter the public from outdoor recreation. We have separately submitted with this testimony a report of hunting incidents from 2007 - 2021, compiled from DNR's own data.**

- **The Department of Natural Resources (DNR), has recently begun to conclude that the deer population in Maryland has stabilized, and additional deer reduction measures are not needed and even contraindicated.** The deer population in Maryland has declined from a high of almost 300,000 in 2002 to just over 200,000. DNR has from time to time reduced bag limits (i.e., the number of deer allowed to be taken), implicitly acknowledging that reducing the deer population is not a priority. **In a February 2022 press release, DNR Wildlife and Heritage Service Director Paul Peditto stated “the deer population is trending toward a population level that reduces damage to agriculture and minimizes impacts on our natural communities.”** Nevertheless, according to DNR's survey, hunters want to see the deer population maintained or increased.
- **We agree that deer can present health, public safety and economic problems in Maryland. However, Sunday hunting is demonstrably not an effective solution to that problem. For example, in all but one of the five Maryland counties that vastly expanded Sunday hunting, the deer harvest has fallen. (See footnote 5)**
- Therefore, **Sunday hunting is not an effective deer management tool; it is rather a hunter convenience tool.** Convenience is surely a benefit, but it is a benefit that should be available to all constituents equitably, not just one small segment. **The number of licensed hunters in Maryland, about 100,000 (of which only about 85,000 are residents), is less than 2% of the state's population of about 6 million.**
- **The Maryland horse industry represents \$2.1 billion in economic impact; 28,000 jobs; \$1 billion in annual spending by participants; \$78 million in tax revenue. Over \$73 million in infrastructure improvements to public and private facilities around the state. There are over 100,000 horses in Maryland (more per square mile than any state in the Union), and 51.8% of Maryland households contain horse enthusiasts. (See attached fact sheets.) There are horses in every county in the state. The majority of Maryland riders are trail riders.**³

The Maryland Horse Council (MHC) is a membership-based, umbrella trade association of the entire horse industry in Maryland. Our membership includes breed, interest and discipline associations, plus horse farms and stables, horse-related businesses, and horse owners representing all facets of the Maryland equestrian community, from the owners of race horses and race tracks, to the owners of international level competition horses, local sport horses, trail

² <https://news.maryland.gov/dnr/2021/02/04/lt-governor-boyd-k-rutherford-maryland-department-of-natural-resources-announce-45-percent-increase-in-maryland-state-parks-attendance-in-2020/>

³ <http://equiery.com/trail-riding-tops-reader-survey/>

horses or just beloved retired companion horses. The owner of Pimlico, Laurel and Rosecroft racetracks is a member, as are vets, tack stores, and other farms, businesses and enthusiasts throughout the state. As such, we stand for over 30,000 Marylanders. Every Maryland county, without exception, is home to hundreds to thousands of horses. There are more horse per square mile in Maryland than in any state in the Union. (See attached fact sheets.)

The horse industry in Maryland is a large, engaged and thriving constituency, and a strong economic engine: 28,000 direct equine related jobs; 16,000 properties occupying over 705,000 acres (almost 10% of Maryland's total land area, and over 25% of Maryland's agricultural land) The industry represents \$2.1 billion in annual economic impact, generating \$78 million in annual tax revenue. Horse industry participants spend \$1 billion dollars annually (compare that to the \$260 million annual figure for hunters cited in the Fiscal and Policy Notes for other Sunday hunting bills). Thus, legislative actions that affect the equine industry have a broad economic effect.

POSITION

The Horse Council opposes SB 155.

BACKGROUND

For over 20 years, the Maryland Horse Council has worked to ensure fair use of shared natural resources during hunting seasons, by seeking to preserve Sundays as the one day of the week when children and adults who are hikers, birdwatchers, dog walkers, trail riders and other outdoor enthusiasts could enjoy the outdoors without concern for adverse interactions with hunters. Almost 20 years ago, we helped defeat a number of statewide Sunday hunting bills. Proponents of Sunday hunting then changed tactics, seeking to introduce Sunday hunting on a county-by-county basis, which we also opposed vigorously. Sometimes they were successful; sometimes not. When they were successful, they succeeded in making an already complicated situation more complicated, making it more difficult for others to plan their outings, and for Natural Resources Police to effectively crack down on poachers and irresponsible hunters, which has caused even more negative encounters between irresponsible hunters and other users.⁴

The Maryland Horse Council has proposed reasonable compromises that would still allow fair use of shared natural resources, by cutting off Sunday hunting, where allowed, at 10:30 am. This compromise still gives hunters, trail riders and others plenty of Sunday access to opportunities. This compromise has been embraced by some legislators, who have praised the Horse Council for this reasonable approach, and it has been adopted by Montgomery, Kent and Wicomico Counties. Now we are facing a bill that would allow all day Sunday hunting in Prince George's County for the first time ever. This bill does nothing to improve the situation for Natural Resources Police and continues to infringe on the rights of other users of our shared natural resources in Maryland.

⁴ In a 2016 Maryland Horse Council survey, 35% of respondents reported "adverse incidents" with hunters while trail riding, ranging from rudeness to deliberate attempts to spook horses, threatening with firearms, and firing of "warning" shots. Significant percentages of DNR's survey respondents also reported problems when encountering hunters.

The issue of recreational Sunday hunting is certainly a fraught one. In a November 2018 independent Gonzales statewide poll, the vast majority of respondents opposed Sunday hunting:

SUNDAY HUNTING Oppose 68.9%; Favor 21.9%

Breakdown:

Strongly Favor 13.5%

Somewhat Favor 8.4%

Somewhat Oppose 15.4%

Strongly Oppose 53.5%

These majorities opposed to Sunday hunting are true in Baltimore Metro, Washington Metro AND Rural areas. Rural Maryland opposed Sunday hunting 60.5% vs 34.1% in favor. Even DNR's own commissioned survey found that a majority of the general population does not favor Sunday hunting and does not want to see it expanded. (See footnote 1.) This bill directly contravenes that clear public opinion.

It is important to make clear that the Horse Council is not opposed to hunting. Many of our members are hunters of deer, other game mammals and game birds. We just want to ensure that everyone has a safe option for enjoyment of the outdoors. **The COVID pandemic has dramatically increased the level of outdoor activity and use of natural resources. Many of these new users are unfamiliar with the rules of hunting and hunting seasons, are unaware that they may encounter hunters in the woods, and may not be aware of the boundaries between public and private lands, which are often not well marked.** Now is not the time to roll the dice and increase the chances of potential adverse interactions between hunters and members of the public who are relatively new to the outdoors. We have separately submitted with this testimony an 8 page report, culled from DNR's own data, of hunting accidents (excluding falls from tree stands and hunter self-inflicted wounds).

Through our years of studying DNR data, we are unconvinced that recreational hunting is the best solution for managing the deer herd. These data reveal that despite expansion of Sunday hunting in some jurisdictions, deer harvest numbers are dropping. We have looked at DNR harvest numbers in the five counties that had a large number of Sunday hunting days added. In all but one of the counties, the harvest numbers declined substantially after Sundays were added.⁵

⁵ Allegany - An increase of from 6 to 13 Sundays from 2013 to 2016. Harvest decline. In 2013-2014, the total harvest was 3636; 2021-2022: 3014, 2022-2023: 3399
Carroll - An increase of from 8 to 14 Sundays. Harvest decline. 2013-2014 - total harvest 5915; 2021-2022: 5071; 2022-2023: 5785
Frederick - Increase of from 6 to 14 Sundays. Harvest decline. 2013-2014 - total harvest 8040; 2021-2022: 6088; 2022-2023: 6935
Garrett - Increase of from 6 to 13 Sundays. Slight increase. 2013-2014 - total harvest 3868; 2021-2022: 3923; 2022-2023: 4989
Washington - Increase of from 6 to 13 Sundays. Harvest decline. 2013-2014 - total harvest 6376; 2021-2022: 3899; 2022-2023: 4600.

It is sometimes argued that the declining numbers of recreational hunters is in part responsible for the declining harvest, but that begs the question of whether relying on recreational hunters is therefore “backing the wrong horse” in the effort to reduce the deer population. **Adding Sundays demonstrably does not increase the harvest; it just affords recreational hunters the luxury of choosing which weekend day to devote to hunting, thereby spreading the same number of deer kills over seven days instead of six. In the DNR survey, almost 60% of the hunters did not indicate that they would harvest more deer if Sundays were available.** So adding Sundays is arguably more a matter of hunter convenience than sound deer management. Convenience is surely a benefit, but it is a benefit that should be available to all constituents equitably, not just one small segment. The number of licensed hunters in Maryland (resident and non-resident) is less than 2% of the state’s population. Compare that with the 24% who reported making frequent or occasional trips specifically to view and experience deer in their native habitat for photography or other non-hunting purposes. (See footnote 1.)

Contravening many arguments that Sunday hunting is needed to help control a burgeoning deer population is the fact that the size of the Maryland deer herd has been steadily declining from a peak of about 300,000 in 2002 to a just over 200,000 recently.⁶ Indeed, DNR has from time to time reduced the bag limits (i.e., the number of deer allowed to be taken), implicitly acknowledging that reducing the deer population is not a priority. According to DNR's survey, hunters want to see the deer population maintained or increased.

It is also sometimes argued that recreational hunters need Sundays because they have other things to do on Saturdays - a situation that plainly applies to most of Maryland's families who use outdoor resources, be they hunters, birdwatchers, dog walkers, mountain bikers, off-road vehicle enthusiasts and trail riders. So why should one group get special consideration? Where is the balancing of the public good, the equitable access? In the Horse Council's statewide survey on Sunday hunting, 68% of respondents ride on trails on public or private land one or more days a week. And, perhaps most significantly, 85% said they changed their schedules or riding locations to avoid encountering hunters.

Another important factor to consider in the balancing of the public good is the fact that, unlike many other states, Maryland's hunting seasons are very long. Part of the basis for these long seasons is that Maryland lacked Sunday hunting for most of its history. When Sunday hunting was introduced, there was not a corresponding shortening of the hunting seasons, so now there are both long seasons and increasing Sunday hunting opportunities.

This bill would authorize Sunday hunting on private land. We of course recognize that private land owners have some right to decide what uses they want to allow on their land. But such rights have never been absolute, as any review of zoning and land use rules can plainly establish. And, as a practical matter the public/private land distinction affords little relief since public and private tracts are often relatively small, non-contiguous, intertwined and rarely well-marked. In our survey, referenced above, 56% of respondents said they ride on trails that cross both public and private land.

⁶ <https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Documents/2020-2034MarylandWTDeerPlan.pdf>

CONCLUSION

We urge the Committee to give SB 155 an unfavorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

THE MARYLAND HORSE COUNCIL

(844) MDHORSE (844-634-6773)

info@mdhorsecouncil.org



of Horses

4th after Baltimore, Montgomery, and Frederick

7,100

of Equine Acres

Includes farms, riding schools, barns, and competition venues

5,700

of Stables

770

THE PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY HORSE INDUSTRY



Values of Horses

Adjusted 2010 \$\$

\$2.73M

Non-Equine Assets

Excludes value of horses

\$215M

Total Capital Expenditures

Includes real estate, equipment, and equine purchases; adjusted 2010 \$\$

\$13.6M

Data source: American Horse Council; Maryland Horse Census
Copyright (c) 2023 Maryland Horse Council



THE MARYLAND HORSE INDUSTRY

Why Does It Matter?

51% of Maryland households contain at least one horse enthusiast
Maryland has 10.5 horses per square mile, more than any other state



1. Economic Impact

\$2.1 billion annual economic impact

\$80 million spent on hay, feed, and straw

\$78 million in tax revenue

2. Open Space

Over 25% of agricultural land in horse use

88,000 acres in permanent preservation

Land conserved with private dollars



3. Tourism

4 international competitions

8 competition venues

14 race courses

4. Health and Wellness

40 therapeutic riding programs

10,000 children served by educational programs

\$8.4 million economic impact



5. Jobs

>28,000 industry jobs

200 equine organizations

16,000 horse farms and stables

Data source: Maryland Horse Industry Board
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SB 155 Testimony Hills Bridge Beagles.pdf

Uploaded by: Margaret Crane

Position: UNF



Hills Bridge Beagles



Testimony SB 155 – Prince George's County - Natural Resources - Sunday Deer Hunting and Archery Hunting Safety Zone

Senate Committee on the Education, Energy, and the Environment

Position: OPPOSE

Good afternoon Chairman Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan and Honorable Committee Members

My name is Margaret Addis Crane. I am a farm owner in Calvert County and the Joint Master of the Hills Bridge Beagles, a beagling foot pack that has meets in all the Southern Maryland counties including Calvert, Charles County, Prince George's and Saint Mary's. The Hills Bridge Beagles (HBB) are a nationally recognized foot pack. Beagling is a chasing sport not a killing sport. The HBB season is September through March because rabbits begin having their young and because of the risks to hounds and followers that copperhead snakes and ticks present.

The pack was formed more than 40 years ago. The pack has between 60-80 followers that come out one or more times in any given season. Our followers range from the very young to the young at heart. Beagling gives people who might not otherwise have the opportunity, a chance to get out in the countryside to enjoy all the beauty Southern Maryland has to offer.

As a threshold matter, I completely support gun hunting in Maryland, and specifically in Prince George's County. The issue I have with SB 155 is this bill allow Sunday hunting in Prince George's County which will prevent non-shooters to enjoy Maryland's natural resources on Sundays. If SB 155 is passed, the effect will be Prince George's County's natural resources will be completely dedicated to the deer hunters. What does this mean for the HBB and its many followers? What it means is the HBB can either stay out of the woods all together, effectively denying our members an opportunity to get in the woods, or the HBB can run the risk of running into deer hunters who are empowered to believe they control the woods. Please imagine, my followers bring children that often range in age from 1 ½ on up, those children run and play in the areas we meet. If those children inadvertently stray towards a property line, they run the risk of being confronted by angry hunter or worse being injured by a stray bullet.

As you are well aware, last year in most Maryland counties Sunday deer hunting was expanded from seven (7) Sundays to twenty-one(21) Sundays each season. Prince George's County was the one lone hold-out. The HBB do everything they can to respect and not interfere with the

deer hunters and what this generally means is we go out on Sundays during deer season. If the time restriction on Sundays is removed, then there will be no way the HBB can avoid the deer hunters. Unfortunately, my experience with deer hunters in Southern Maryland is they do not want to share the resource. As a result, the HBB and its followers have been subjected to threats and harassment by deer hunters because the deer hunters do not want anybody to “disturb” the deer.

The HBB is not anti-gun or anti-hunting by any means. What the HBB are advocating for *is a “share the resource” approach*. It is important that we encourage all outdoor recreation to give people an opportunity to get outside to enjoy all the natural beauty that Maryland has to offer. Unfortunately, my experience has been that deer hunters are not interested in sharing the resource. Private land of all sizes is leased to deer hunters and they believe because they pay to lease the land that they should control not just the land they lease but all of the land abutting it as well. I’d just ask that you consider a *sharing the resource approach* and oppose SB 155.

If you’re interested in learning more about Beagling you can see the HBB on Outdoors Maryland by using the following link <https://americanarchive.org/catalog/cpb-aacip-394-23hx3m9f>. This video won an Emmy and was voted Maryland’s Favorite dog video. I would note that the HBB can no longer hunt on the farm shown in the Outdoors Maryland video. The farm, which is Anne Arundel County, was purchased by DNR, and the farm is now limited solely to deer hunting. The Beagles cannot use that farm even one time a year, which is a sad commentary on resource management.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony before this honorable Committee.

Margaret Crane

NoToSB0155-Sonnett.pdf

Uploaded by: Shannon Sonnett

Position: UNF

March 7, 2023

To: Senator Michael Jackson
Maryland General Assembly

From: Shannon Sonnett
Upper Marlboro, MD

I'd like to register an "unfavorable" response to the SB0155 bill to be evaluated on March 8, 2023. I am a long-time resident and equestrian in Prince George's County. If this bill were passed, the time I am currently able to spend outdoors with my family and friends riding and trail riding in the cooler months would be prohibited and dangerous for 5 months of the year. I am strictly limited to trail riding on Sundays currently and this bill proposes that I would not be able to trail ride at all during these cooler months. While training in the ring is an important part of the equestrian sports, the open fields and trails are important for building stamina and strength for longer competitions and just for fun! Please allow us one day to partake in outdoor activities like trail riding on Sundays by voting NO to SB0155.

Thank you,
Shannon Sonnett