

# **Support of SB 777 - Middle Shore Counties - Sunday**

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 777 - Middle Shore Counties - Sunday Hunting - Repeal of Time Restrictions**

On behalf of our Calvert County Farm Bureau member families, I submit this written testimony in support of SB 777, legislation that repeals the 10:30 AM restriction during which a person must be out of the woods when hunting on each Sunday of the game bird and game mammal seasons in Caroline County, Dorchester County, Talbot County, and Wicomico County. The Sunday hunting bill passed in 2022 with the 10:30 AM restriction.

Having counties with different hunting time makes it difficult to know when and where you are allowed to hunt throughout the state. We understand that the counties have the right to set whether they will allow Sunday hunting or not, but the 10:30 AM restriction was not requested by the county nor the private landowners in the county. There should be uniformity in hunting laws so more people will want to hunt without worrying if they are breaking the law from county to county.

**MDFB Policy:** We support uniform Sunday deer hunting laws throughout the state on private land.

**MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 777 & REQUESTS A FAVORABLE REPORT**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colby Ferguson'.

Colby Ferguson  
Director of Government Relations

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

# **SB777, Letter of Support Caroline County.pdf**

Uploaded by: Johnny Mautz

Position: FAV



CAROLINE COUNTY  
*you belong here*  
CAROLINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OFFICE

JAMES TRAVIS BREEDING, PRESIDENT  
LARRY C. PORTER, VICE PRESIDENT  
NORMAN FRANKLIN BARTZ, III., COMMISSIONER  
109 Market Street, Room 123  
Denton, Maryland 21629

**House Bill 1118/Senate Bill 777**

Mid Shore Counties – Sunday Hunting – Repeal of Time Restrictions

Position: **SUPPORT**

Date: March 8, 2023

To: Education, Energy, and the Environment

The Caroline County Commissioners **SUPPORT** HB 1118/SB 777 Mid Shore Counties – Sunday Hunting – Repeal of Time Restrictions.

During the 2022 Legislative Session, the Caroline County Commissioner requested legislation to allow Caroline County residents to be able to hunt for gamebirds (excluding migratory gamebirds) and game mammals on every Sunday during the open hunting seasons on private lands only.

The General Assembly passed the legislation with amendments to restrict the times in which someone can hunt on their own lands, on Sundays (from 30 minutes before sunrise to 10:30am).

This legislation will repeal the unnecessary time restrictions so that Sunday hunting times will match the allotted times set by the current requirements for the specified game species for Monday – Saturday.

With this, we respectfully request a favorable report on House Bill 1118/Senate Bill 777.

Sincerely,

J. Travis Breeding  
President  
Caroline County Commissioners

**SB777, Letter of Support Dorchester County.pdf**

Uploaded by: Johnny Mautz

Position: FAV

**COUNTY COUNCIL OF DORCHESTER COUNTY**

**COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING  
P.O. BOX 26  
CAMBRIDGE, MARYLAND 21613  
PHONE: (410) 228-1700  
FAX: (410) 228-9641**

**GEORGE L. PFEFFER, JR., PRESIDENT  
MIKE DETMER, VICE PRESIDENT  
ROB KRAMER, JR.  
WILLIAM V. NICHOLS  
RICKY C. TRAVERS**



**JEFF POWELL  
INTERIM COUNTY MANAGER  
MACLEOD LAW GROUP LLC  
INTERIM COUNTY ATTORNEY**

February 23, 2023

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Senator  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
2 West  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: Letter of Support – Senate Bill 777, “Middle Shore Counties - Sunday Hunting - Repeal of Time Restrictions.”**

Dear Chairman Feldman and Committee Members:

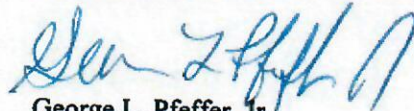
On behalf of the Dorchester County Council, I respectfully offer its support for Senate Bill 777, “Middle Shore Counties - Sunday Hunting - Repeal of Time Restrictions” for the purpose of repealing the time restrictions that apply to Sunday hunting in Caroline County, Dorchester County, Talbot County, and Wicomico County; and generally relating to Sunday hunting in Caroline County, Dorchester County, Talbot County, and Wicomico County.

Repealing time restrictions on Sundays will allow hunters the opportunity to increase hunting in the areas of overpopulation within Dorchester County and the other local jurisdictions. Additionally, it will encourage other individuals to take up the sport, which will economically benefit many of the rural areas as hunters purchase gas, food, lodging and other items. We ask that you look favorably upon this bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this letter of support. If you have any questions, please contact the Council’s Office at (410) 228-1700.

Sincerely,

DORCHESTER COUNTY COUNCIL

  
George L. Pfeffer, Jr.  
President

cc: The Honorable Johnny Mautz, Senator  
The Honorable Christopher T. Adams, Delegate  
The Honorable Sheree Sample-Hughes, Delegate  
The Honorable Tom Hutchinson, Delegate

**23-0221 L Feldman - SB 777-Sunday Hunting-Repeal o**

Uploaded by: Laura Hurley

Position: FAV



## WICOMICO COUNTY, MARYLAND

P.O. BOX 870  
SALISBURY, MARYLAND 21803-0870  
410-548-4696  
FAX: 410-548-7872

### WICOMICO COUNTY COUNCIL

John T. Cannon, President/At-Large  
Shane T. Baker, Vice-President/District #3  
James Winn, At-Large  
Shanie Shields, District #1  
Jeff Merritt, District #2

Josh Hastings, District #4  
Joe Holloway, District #5  
Laura Hurley, Council Administrator

February 21, 2023

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
Attn.: Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair  
2 West  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Senate Bill No. 777- Middle Shore Counties – Sunday Hunting –Repeal of Time Restrictions

Dear Honorable Chairman Feldman and Committee Members:

We are writing this letter in support of Senate Bill No. 777, as introduced, to repeal the time restrictions that apply to Sunday hunting in Wicomico County.

Many sportsmen work six days a week, which makes it difficult for them to go out and hunt. The time restrictions on Sundays makes it even more challenging as there is limited time to appreciate the sport with demanding schedules. This creates a challenge in retaining and recruiting new hunters.

According to the Sportsmen's Alliance, sportsmen generate more than \$26 million as a result of hunting and fishing license sales in Maryland. In addition, hunters purchase hunting gear, clothes, trucks, ATVs and boats, which may increase revenues for small businesses, and farmers that have suffered crop damage from wildlife may benefit too. There should be an opportunity for sportsmen to take advantage of the sport seven days a week without time restrictions on Sunday so they can enjoy their investment.

We thank you for your time and consideration of Senate Bill No. 777 as introduced. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the Council Office at 410-548-4696.



Sincerely,

WICOMICO COUNTY, MARYLAND



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Julie M. Giordano, County Executive



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John T. Cannon, Council President

cc: Wicomico County Council  
Wicomico County State Delegation

**SB 777\_mgoldstein\_fav 2023.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mathew Goldstein

Position: FAV



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March 08, 2023

**SB 111 - SUPPORT**

Middle Shore Counties - Sunday Hunting - Repeal of Time Restrictions

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

**Al Martinez Testimony for SB 777 Mar-8-2023.pdf**

Uploaded by: Al Martinez

Position: UNF

SB 0777 - Repealing Time Restrictions – Sunday Hunting – UNFAVORABLE

Dear Chairman Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy, and Environmental Environment Committee:

Last year a compromise over Sunday hunting was reached with a time limit of 10:30 am.

People walking, jogging, cycling, and trail riding have had to accept and adjust to these compromised measures. We do not hear from the great majority of the population that does not hunt. Many curtail and limit their plans for the outdoors during hunting season because of the potential hazards of hunting accidents. That does not mean that they do not care. I don't think most people are against hunting either. I feel those that wish to participate in sport hunting have a right to do so. I defend that right.

But please understand we all must share and be reasonable in the time that we have to participate in outdoor activities. Weekends are limited times when individuals and families can enjoy outdoor activities. Saturday and Sunday are the two days almost everyone can plan to participate in outdoor activities. Those that hunt have six days, Monday through Saturday, and Sunday until 10:30. The rest of the entire population is potentially restricted to part of one day, Sunday, where they can enjoy outdoor activities with less risk of hunting related accidents and danger to trail riders when horses spook from the gun fire.

Laws must serve the needs and welfare of all. During hunting season there must be a slot of time when outdoor activities for the non-hunting population are available. This is only fair. I am sure I speak for the great majority of the people in this area when I respectfully request that the Sunday 10:30 hunting time limit not be repealed.

Respectfully submitted,

Al Martinez  
President  
Tuckahoe Equestrian Center  
12587 Eveland Road, Ridgely, MD 21660

# **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](mailto: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.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>, <hpcrmetips@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-10:30-Mid-Shore-Senate.**

Uploaded by: Jane Seigler

Position: UNF



MARYLAND  
**HORSE**  
COUNCIL

P.O. Box 606 | Lisbon, Maryland 21797  
[www.mdhorsecouncil.org](http://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 777

Middle Shore Counties – Sunday Hunting – Repeal of Time Restrictions - UNFAVORABLE

- 
- ❖ **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.<sup>1</sup>
  - ❖ **This bill would allow all day Sunday hunting in Caroline County, Dorchester County, Talbot County, and Wicomico County for many months of the year.**
  - ❖ **This bill upends a compromise solution that many hoped would bring this issue, which has consumed much of this Committee’s time for many years, to a final closure that gave everyone a little bit of what they wanted. It seeks to strip recreational users of their only right to quiet and safe enjoyment of the outdoors on one - partial - day of the week.**
  - ❖ **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 last year of the Great Maryland Outdoors Act. 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. The majority of Maryland’s equestrians are trail riders.**
  - ❖ **Since the advent of the pandemic, widespread use of outdoor recreation and natural resources by the general public has only increased.** For example, attendance at

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<sup>1</sup> [https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Documents/2018\\_DeerPublicOpinionSurvey.pdf](https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Documents/2018_DeerPublicOpinionSurvey.pdf)

Maryland State Parks in 2020 increased 45% over 2019, which was also a record year.<sup>2</sup> Demand has remained strong. **Many of these new users are unfamiliar with the rules of hunting and hunting seasons, including the distinctions between public and private 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 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. 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.<sup>3</sup> There are horses in every county in the state. The majority of Maryland riders are trail riders.<sup>4</sup>**

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 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. Every Maryland county, without exception, is home to hundreds to thousands of horses. (See attached fact sheet.) There are more horse per square mile in Maryland than in any state in the Union. (See attached fact sheet.)

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 of other Sunday hunting bills). Thus, legislative actions that affect the equine industry have a broad economic effect.

## POSITION

The Horse Council opposes SB 777.

## BACKGROUND

For over 20 years, the Maryland Horse Council has worked to ensure fair use of shared natural resources during hunting season, 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.

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<sup>2</sup> <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/>

<sup>3</sup> See attached fact sheet.

<sup>4</sup> <http://equiery.com/trail-riding-tops-reader-survey/>

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.<sup>5</sup>

Beginning in 2016, MHC 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 was embraced by some legislators, who have praised the Horse Council for this reasonable approach. In recent years, it was adopted by Montgomery, Kent and Wicomico Counties.

Last year, bills were introduced that would have allowed all-day Sunday hunting for all species in all seasons (thus for many months out of the year) in Calvert, Charles, Caroline, Queen Anne's and Somerset Counties, as well as Talbot County for deer hunting from the first Sunday in October through the second Sunday in January, plus all five Sundays of the Spring (April-May) turkey season. Just two legislative days before the end of the session, the bills were amended, passed and sent to the Governor. The amendments essentially preserved any full day Sundays that each county already had, and required that any additional Sunday hunting must end at 10:30 am, except that Calvert, Caroline, Charles and Queen Anne's also were permitted to add full Sundays during the Spring turkey season. There were a few additional tweaks: in a last minute floor amendment, Dorchester County was added to the Queen Anne's and Caroline bill on the same terms. The Talbot County bill was amended to allow hunting until 10:30 on all Sundays in each of the deer seasons, except for two full Sundays in the firearms season and five full Sundays in the bow season (which they already had). Talbot had requested full day Sundays in the Spring turkey season, but got them only until 10:30. With these amendments, Senator Pinsky and the Committee sent a strong signal that this issue should be put to bed, with a compromise that gave everyone a little bit of what they wanted.

This bill attempts to roll back those compromises, and to strip recreational users of their only right to quiet and safe enjoyment of the outdoors on one - partial - day of the week. The bill would allow all day Sunday hunting for all species in Caroline and Dorchester, for all deer seasons in Talbot, for deer firearms in Wicomico, and for Spring turkey in Talbot. This bill does nothing to improve the situation for Natural Resources Police and continues to infringe on the fair rights of other users of our shared natural resources in Maryland.

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:

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<sup>5</sup> 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.

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 MHC 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. According to DNR, 2020 State Park attendance increased by 45% to 21.5 million visitors. Demand has remained strong. In 2021, **Lt. Governor Rutherford stated: "With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic changing the way we live, work, and play, more and more Marylanders are finding affordable, socially-distant, and family-friendly recreation opportunities at our parks and public lands,"** (See footnote 2.) Many of these new users are unfamiliar with the rules of hunting and hunting seasons, and are unaware that they may encounter hunters in the woods. 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..

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? The number of licensed hunters in Maryland, about 100,000, is less than 2% of the state's population of about 6 million. The number of licensed resident hunters is reportedly ninth lowest among all the states.<sup>6</sup> Compare that with the 24% who reported (pre-pandemic) making frequent or occasional trips specifically to view and experience wildlife in their native habitat for photography or other non-hunting purposes. (See footnote 1.)

In MHC'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.

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.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/maryland-is-the-9-state-with-the-fewest-registered-hunters/ar-AAPKtT8>

## CONCLUSION

We urge the Committee to give SB 777 an unfavorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

**THE MARYLAND HORSE COUNCIL**  
(844) MDHORSE (844-634-6773)  
[info@mdhorsecouncil.org](mailto:info@mdhorsecouncil.org)



# THE MID-SHORE HORSE INDUSTRY

Talbot, Caroline, and Dorchester

Number of Horses

**3,150**

Number of Stables

**830**

Equine Acres

**9,300**

Capital Expenditures

**\$15.5 million**

Non-Horse Assets

**\$138 million**



Data Source: Maryland Horse Census; USDA Ag. Census  
Copyright (c) 2023 Maryland Horse Council

# THE LOWER SHORE HORSE INDUSTRY



Wicomico, Somerset, and Worcester



**2,870**  
Number of Horses



**900**  
Stables



**13,843**  
Number of equine acres



**\$129 million**  
Total Assets



**\$2.8 million**  
Capital Expenditures



**\$147 million**  
Economic Impact  
Ocean Downs and Assateague



*Data Source: Maryland Horse Census; USDA Ag. 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

Four international competition venues

\$\_\_\_ generated in Prince George's County

Three internationally televised events

### 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  
Copyright (c) 2022 Maryland Horse Council

**SB 0777.pdf**

Uploaded by: Leslie Passano

Position: UNF

March 6, 2023

Re: Middle Shore Counties - Sunday Hunting - Repeal of Time Restrictions  
SB 777; Cross-filled with HB 1118

To Whom It May Concern,

As a landowner and sportswoman, I Oppose SB 0777.

The existing bill is already in place as a compromise between hunting and non-hunting people. This proposed SB 0777 would eliminate the opportunity to share Sundays amongst birdwatchers, dog walkers, hikers, cyclists & other sportsmen and women.

As a farm owner, I respect the natural cycle of the wildlife and enjoy being in it. Riding my horse in our woods gives me comfort only when I know who my neighbors are. But if I'm someone else's property or in a state park, it can be dangerous if I overlap unknowingly with a hunter.

The existing compromise\* should stand to represent all who enjoy Maryland's great outdoors. People do not feel safe when there are those who hunt nearby- whether it's a landowner to neighbors.

Thank you for considering my point of view.

Regards,

-Leslie Passano

3030 Crosiadore Lane

Trappe, MD. 21673

Talbot County

\*Com•pro•mise: each side making concessions

**Stacy Frank Testimony for SB 777 Mar-8-2023.pdf**

Uploaded by: Stacy Frank

Position: UNF

## SB0777 - Repealing Time Restriction – UNFAVORABLE

I am writing to oppose SB0777/HB1118 regarding Sunday hunting. I live on a horse farm in Caroline County directly across from the Tuckahoe State Park and am an active member of the equestrian community. The trails, woods and fields in the park are multi-purpose and are used extensively by horseback riders, hikers, bicyclists, bird watchers, families with their dogs and baby carriages and many others just out to enjoy nature. This has increased noticeably since the pandemic. Hunters of all species also frequent this and many other parks and public lands. While the other users of these lands all happily co-exist, the hunters are the group that represent potential danger to all the others. And yet hunting licenses are issued to only 2% of Maryland's population (about 119,000 people). 84% of the population has never hunted and nearly 69% of all Marylanders oppose Sunday hunting.

Until recently hunting was not permitted on Sundays, but a compromise was reached whereby Sunday hunting is allowed but only up to 10:30 a.m. thus leaving the remainder of the day to be enjoyed in safety. This smallest percent of the population clearly knows how to get their voices heard.

As an active trail rider, I am always concerned about being near gun fire. Horses tend to spook at loud sudden noises and present a danger to the rider. As they are large animals they can also be mistaken for deer from a distance.

The deer population in Maryland is stable or declining and does not exceed the capacity of our natural resources. Bag limits are not set to increase so hunters will still be entitled to kill their allotment of deer.

Many nature enthusiasts already feel obliged to change their outdoor plans to avoid being around those who hunt. While everyone is entitled to enjoy the great outdoors the way they choose there should still be at least 1 day per week when the vast majority can do so safely.

Hunters argue they need to be able to take their children hunting on Sundays as they work all week, and the kids are in school. The super majority of Marylanders are in the same position, working all week and children in school. And, on a personal note, I cannot fathom why parents would feel the need to teach their children how to kill another living being. They are no longer dependent on hunting to put food on the table. Please leave the 10:30 hunting cutoff in place so the rest of us can safely enjoy Sundays outdoors in peace.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy Frank  
12587 Eveland Rd., Ridgely, MD 21660