

JACK BAILEY
Legislative District 29
Calvert and St. Mary's Counties

Budget & Taxation Committee



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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March 8, 2023

Senate Bill 323 – Calvert County – Sunday Hunting – Repeal of Time Restrictions

Dear Chairman Feldman and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to introduce Senate Bill 323, a local bill to expand Sunday hunting in Calvert County. Under current law, Sunday hunting is not permitted after 10:30 a.m. in Calvert County except on each Sunday of the deer firearms season, the last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season, and each Sunday of the spring turkey hunting season. This bill would repeal that time restriction and allow for full-day Sunday hunting in Calvert County on each day of the game bird and game mammal seasons.

I believe very strongly that all Marylanders should be able to hunt on Sundays. Hunting is significantly regulated by the State, even on private land. There is a requirement that hunters must attend a Hunter Safety Education class, pass a written test, demonstrate firearm safety, and purchase a hunting license. Before hunting on private property, the hunter is required by law to get written permission of the landowner. The landowner can determine when, for what species, what methods, and how hunting is allowed on their own property.

It is particularly important for younger hunters, who often have school sporting events on weekdays and Saturdays, to permit Sunday hunting so that the next generation of hunters can have an opportunity to participate in this great tradition. Sunday has become a very popular day for hunting in our State. Despite the current restrictions, according to the Department of Natural Resources, hunters harvested over 6,800 deer on Sundays in the 2022-23 season, representing 9% of the total harvest.

Maryland's restrictions on Sunday hunting are a relic of an era that has long since passed. It is legal to target shoot on Sundays and to trap and kill groundhogs, coyotes, fisher, gray and red fox, nutria, opossum, raccoon and skunks on Sunday. It is also legal to shoot on a regulated shooting area or with a crop damage permit on Sunday. The current Sunday hunting laws are a significant restriction on the rights of private property owners to hunt or permit hunting on their own property.

It is important to note that this bill only pertains to Sunday hunting on private property in Calvert County and does not alter any provisions of law regarding public lands. Senate Bill 323 has the support of the Calvert County Senators, the Calvert County Delegation, and the Board of County Commissioners of Calvert County.

I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 323. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Bailey', written over a horizontal line.

Senator Jack Bailey