

Submission by:
Luke Muldoon
Lukemuldoon2@gmail.com
240.304.2484

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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

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Lukemuldoon2@gmail.com
240.304.2484