

# **HB 1119\_mgoldstein\_fav 2023.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mathew Goldstein

Position: FAV



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March 08, 2023

**HB 1119 - SUPPORT**

Dorchester County - Hunting - Fur-Bearing Mammals

Dear Chair Barve, Vice-Chair Stein, and members of the Environment and Transportation 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

# **HB 1119 Testimony TSH.pdf**

Uploaded by: Tom Hutchinson

Position: FAV

**THOMAS S. HUTCHINSON**  
*Legislative District 37B*  
Caroline, Dorchester, Talbot,  
and Wicomico Counties



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Health and Government Operations  
Committee

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Public Health and  
Minority Health Disparities

Health Occupations and  
Long-Term Care

**THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES**  
**ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401**

*Dorchester County Delegation*

**HB1119 Dorchester County- Hunting- Fur Bearing Mammals**

**Environment and Transportation Committee**

**March 8, 2023**

**Why We Need This Bill**

Dorchester County has a disproportionately large population of foxes and coyotes. The population needs to be managed. They have become a nuisance to the citizens of the County. Foxes and coyotes raid waste bins, dig up plants and gardens, make dens in dwellings and prey on small livestock such as ducks, chickens and more. Many residents believe that either a fox or coyote is responsible for the loss of small animals such as kittens and small dogs on their property.

In addition, foxes and coyotes are territorial. They threaten native wildlife as well as livestock. They pose a risk to humans and pets through transmission of diseases such as distemper, parva virus, and mange.

**What Does This Bill Do**

**HB1119** matches the hunting of **Foxes** to Charles County. By adding Dorchester County, the bill allows residents of Dorchester County to legally hunt a fox or coyote that is infringing on their property.

**The Dorchester County Delegation respectfully ask the Committee for a FAVORABLE vote on HB1119 with Amendment.**

**HB1119\_FAV\_HSUS.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jennifer Bevan-Dangel

Position: UNF



## THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

March 8, 2023

Bill: HB 1119 – Dorchester County - Hunting - Fur-Bearing Mammals  
Committee: House Environment and Transportation Committee  
Position: OPPOSE

Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee:

We submit this testimony in opposition to HB 1119, which would require the Maryland DNR to establish a year-round hunting season for fur-bearing mammals in Dorchester County. There is no justification for allowing one County in Maryland to hunt fur-bearing mammals without limit or restriction. Doing so could put Maryland's fisher, fox, long tailed weasel, mink, opossum, otter, raccoon, and skunks in danger.

### **Allowing a year-round open season on fur-bearing mammals in Dorchester County violates scientific principles of wildlife management.**

All wildlife species play integral roles in healthy ecosystems, and indiscriminately killing them harms our environment and our communities. The indiscriminate killing promoted by this bill is counterproductive to effective wildlife management. Scientific studies have shown that many wildlife populations depleted by unnatural means simply reproduce more quickly due to the sudden drop in competition for resources and changes to social structure from the loss of individuals.

According to DNR's own website, "hunting and trapping seasons and bag limits are established based on furbearer biology, distribution and abundance of each species, public interests and needs and the incidence of furbearer damage complaints."<sup>1</sup> Those factors should be the considerations determining hunting and trapping seasons for fur-bearing mammals. This exemption defies those principles and undermines a statewide approach to wildlife management.

### **Maryland's wildlife is worth far more alive than dead, there is no justification for expanding to year-round hunting in Dorchester County.**

Recent landmark research led by Colorado State University titled the "America's Wildlife Values Project" found that animal welfare has become an increasingly important concern for the general public, and the number of those who value wildlife as "part of their extended social network" has grown.<sup>2</sup> In that study, more Marylanders identified with a "mutualist" view that favors coexistence with wildlife, than a "traditionalist" view that wildlife should be used and management for human benefit. And more than 67% of Maryland residents surveyed agreed that their state should strive for environmental protection over economic growth.

Nationwide and in Maryland, wildlife watchers and those who participate in non-consumptive outdoor recreation outnumber and outspend hunters and trappers by a wide margin.<sup>3</sup> (Fig. 2 and Fig. 3).

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<sup>1</sup> [https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/hunt\\_trap/furbearers.aspx](https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/hunt_trap/furbearers.aspx)

<sup>2</sup> Manfredo, M.J., Sullivan, L., Don Carlos, A.W., Dietsch, A.M., Teel, T.L., Bright, A.D., & Bruskotter, J. (2018). *America's Wildlife Values: The Social Context of Wildlife Management in the U.S.* National report from the research project entitled "America's Wildlife Values." Fort Collins, CO: Colorado State University, Department of Human Dimensions of Natural Resources. <https://sites.warnercnr.colostate.edu/wildlifevalues/>

<sup>3</sup> The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Associated Recreation (2016) at



Fig. 2

USFWS: Wildlife Recreation Participation & Expenditures: 2011 vs. 2016 data From: 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation			
	2011	2016	Percent change
Wildlife watchers	71.8M	86.0M	20
Wildlife watcher expenditures	\$59.1B	\$75.9B	28
Hunter numbers	13.7M	11.5M	-16
Hunter expenditures	\$36.3B	\$25.6B	-29

Fig. 3

Outdoor recreation spending in the U.S. (2021) From: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis		
Activity	Spending [in millions of dollars]	% of total
Hunting and trapping	4,831	1.27
Other outdoor recreation	62,796	16.5
Trips and travel	123,860	32.6
Total outdoor recreation	380,471	100.00

Maryland’s non-consumptive public land users outnumber and outspend hunters and trappers by a wide margin. The National Park Service reports, “In 2021, 6.7 million park visitors spent an estimated \$247 million in local gateway regions while visiting National Park Service lands in Maryland. These expenditures supported a total of 2,940 jobs, \$130 million in labor income, \$215 million in value added, and \$344 million in economic output in the Maryland economy.”<sup>4</sup>

According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis-Dept. of Commerce, outdoor recreation in Maryland generated more than \$6.5 billion for the state’s economy in 2021. Of that figure, hunting and trapping generated 1.3%, while spending for RVing was more than twice that. And people spent almost 24 times more on travel and tourism in Maryland than on hunting and trapping (Fig. 4).<sup>5</sup>

Fig. 4. Outdoor recreation spending in Maryland (2021 data from U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis)

Outdoor recreation spending in Maryland (2021) From: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis		
Sample activities	Spending (in thousands of dollars)	% of total
Hunting and trapping	86,230	1.3
RVing	181,823	2.8

<https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2018/demo/fhw16-nat.pdf>; and Dept. of Commerce Bureau of Economic Analysis, “Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account, U.S. and States, 2021,” <https://www.bea.gov/data/special-topics/outdoor-recreation>

<sup>4</sup> National Park Service. (2022). National Park Service Visitor Spending Effects Report. <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/socialscience/vse.htm>.

<sup>5</sup> Bureau of Economic Analysis: Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account, U.S. and States, 2021. <https://www.bea.gov/data/special-topics/outdoor-recreation>





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OF THE UNITED STATES**

Other outdoor recreation	1,137,125	17.3
Travel and tourism	2,042,090	31.1
Total Outdoor Recreation	6,567,148	100.00

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reported that in 2021, only 1.9% of Maryland residents were paid hunting license holders.<sup>6</sup> There is no reason to allow the hunting of fur-bearing mammals year round in Dorchester County simply to provide additional recreational activities for a tiny percentage of the state's population.

We therefore ask that you issue an unfavorable report for HB 1119. Thank you again for the opportunity to share these comments.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Bevan-Dangel  
Maryland State Director  
The Humane Society of the United States  
[jbevandangel@humanesociety.org](mailto:jbevandangel@humanesociety.org)

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<sup>6</sup> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. (2021). Hunting Licenses, Holders, and Costs by Apportionment Year.

# **Dorchester County - Hunting - Fur-Bearing Mammals**

Uploaded by: Lisa Radov

Position: UNF



## MARYLAND VOTES FOR ANIMALS

PO Box 10411  
BALTIMORE, MD 21209

March 8, 2023

To: House Environment and Transportation Committee  
From: Lisa Radov, President and Chair, Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.  
Re: Dorchester County - Hunting - Fur-Bearing Mammals – HB 1119 - Oppose

Chair Barve, Vice - Chair Stein, members of the Environment and Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. My name is Lisa Radov. I am the President and Chair of Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc. We champion humane legislation to improve the lives of animals in Maryland. Speaking for Maryland Votes for Animals, our Board of Directors, and our members across the State of Maryland, I respectfully ask that the House Environment & Transportation Committee give an unfavorable vote to Dorchester County - Hunting - Fur-Bearing Mammals HB 1119.

This bill would require the Department of Natural Resources to establish a year-round open season for the hunting of fur-bearing mammals in Dorchester County. It would remove certain limitations on the hunting of fur-bearing mammals on Sundays in Dorchester County and authorize a person to hunt fur-bearing mammals on public land in Dorchester County designated for hunting by the Department of Natural Resources on certain Sundays.

Maryland Votes for Animals is concerned about establishment of a year-round open hunting season for one county. We are also concerned about setting a precedent to allow fur-bearing mammals to be hunted on Sundays during the fur-bearing mammal season as this may not reflect the wishes of all of the residents of the County. Many families enjoy Sundays in public places as time for family hiking. Moreover, people who ride horses enjoy Sundays and do not want the concern of hunters in their midst posing a danger to them or their horses. Dorchester County is not so different from the other Maryland County that it needs this additional time to hunt fur-bearing mammals.

I urge the committee to give HB 1119 an unfavorable vote to HB 1119.



# **HB\_1119\_DNR\_INFO**

Uploaded by: Lisa Eustler

Position: INFO



Wes Moore, Governor  
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor  
Josh Kurtz, Secretary  
Allan Fisher, Deputy Secretary

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March 8, 2023

**BILL NUMBER: House Bill 1119 – First Reader**

**SHORT TITLE: Dorchester County - Hunting - Fur-Bearing Mammals**

**DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: LETTER OF INFORMATION WITH AMENDMENTS**

**EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT’S POSITION:**

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The Maryland Department of Natural Resources provides the following information and suggested amendments regarding House Bill 1119. It is the understanding of the Department that the primary goal of House Bill 1119 is to authorize year-round hunting of coyotes in Dorchester County, primarily due to human safety concerns. The Department recommends that House Bill 1119 be amended to specifically address coyote hunting in Dorchester County, and avoid altering long-standing seasons and bag limits for the remaining fur-bearing mammals. Suggested amendments are attached. The Department would note that it has the authority to address this issue in regulation.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

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Fur-bearing mammals include beaver, bobcat, coyote, fisher, fox (red and gray), long-tailed weasel, mink, muskrat, opossum, otter, raccoon, and skunk.

Most fur-bearing mammals are highly valued by hunters, trappers, wildlife watchers, and many of the general public who like to view them. Like other game species regulated by DNR, they are carefully managed using long-standing wildlife management principles. Hunting seasons and bag limits for these species are conservation-based and structured to ensure their populations are not exploited. Hunting and trapping seasons typically coincide with colder months when fur is prime and reproductive activities of the species are not occurring. The populations of most of these species do not warrant a year-round season, and having year-round seasons is not ecologically responsible.

Of the 13 fur-bearing mammals defined in statute, currently only coyote, fox, opossum, raccoon, and skunk may be hunted. Most of these species have a November – February hunting season for the reasons mentioned above.

**BILL EXPLANATION:**

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This bill, as drafted, would authorize the year-round hunting of 13 fur-bearing mammal species in Dorchester County.

Contact: Emily Wilson, Director, Legislative and Constituent Services (Acting)  
[emilyh.wilson@maryland.gov](mailto:emilyh.wilson@maryland.gov) ♦ 410-260-8426 (office) ♦ 443-223-1176 (cell)

BY:

(To be offered in the Environment and Transportation Committee)

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL 1119  
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in line 2, strike “**Fur-Bearing Mammals**” and substitute “**Coyote**”; strike beginning with “requiring” in line 3 down through “Sundays” in line 8 and substitute “authorizing a person to hunt or trap a coyote or possess the pelt of a coyote at any time of year in Dorchester County”; in line 9, strike “fur-bearing mammals” and substitute “coyote”; in line 12, strike “10–406, 10–410(a)(1)(iv) and (15)(i)6.” and substitute “10–406(b)”; and strike in their entirety lines 15 through 19, inclusive.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 2, in line 2, strike the brackets; in the same line strike “SUBSECTIONS”; in the same line, after “(b)”, strike “AND (C)”; after line 30, insert:

**“(6) IN DORCHESTER COUNTY, A PERSON MAY HUNT OR TRAP A FOX OR COYOTE OR POSSESS THE PELT OF A FOX OR COYOTE AT ANY TIME OF YEAR.”**;

and in lines 31 and 33, strike “(6)” and “(7)”, respectively, and substitute “**(7)**” and “**(8)**”, respectively.

AMENDMENT NO. 3

On page 3, strike in their entirety lines 6 through 7, inclusive; in line 16, strike the brackets; in line 17, strike “; AND”; strike in their entirety lines 18 through 19, inclusive; in line 22, strike the brackets; in the same line, strike the colon; in line 23, strike “A. TURKEY”; in the same line, strike “; AND”; and strike in their entirety lines 24 through 25, inclusive.