

March 1, 2023

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve,

HB983/SB327

Environment and Transportation Committee, thank you for your time today. I am Webb Johnson vice President of Maryland outfitters and guides association and President of Quakerneck Outfitters. I'm here to testify on SB0327/HB983. We understand the need for more money to Maryland's DNR, Wildlife and Heritage, and Natural resource police. Buy the increase in the license, stamps and the addition of the new Sitka stamp. However, we are **AGAINST** – the Hunting of Migratory Game Birds on Sunday. Waterfowl hunting will have a limited to no effect on license sales and recruitment.

Using statics from the last state to allow Sunday waterfowl hunting , Virginia in 2013, they saw only a year or two of increased to flat license sales (USFW) before they continued their downward trends. Today there are 46,000 less license (USFW) holders in Virginia than in 2013!

Increase in Hunting Pressure

This is among the main reasons that we see less Canada Geese wintering in MD and the hardest to quantify. With maturing of Canada Goose hunting, we are seeing very few Sanctuary areas for these birds to sit unmolested. Very few farms, large or small, with or without ponds in the primary Goose zones are not being hunted.

Unfortunately, a majority of our tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay are no longer considered safe resting areas as unsuccessful hunters now rally birds continuously. I wish I had time to create a "heat map" that would show the massive number of hunting blinds located in the goose zones. Creating a continuous 41 +/- day goose/duck season combined with maximum hunter pressure, without any days off -SUNDAYS, will hasten the Northerly retreat of our beloved Canadian Geese and ducks.

The just released 2023 mid -winter waterfowl survey showed a 40,000-bird decrease (MD DNR) in population from 2022 despite the "reported" increase in the mated bird count. Many geese can now be seen moving back north before the end of January due to pressure. Unless heavy snow and ice block their northerly progression, which is increasingly uncommon these days.

More pressure/harvest=less movement=less opportunity=less hunter recruitment=less license/stamp sales=less income for the Wildlife and Heritage Service.

Less Canadian Geese in Maryland

This will force higher and earlier monetary contributions supporting DNR from Maryland's General Fund.

We support SB 327 / HB 983, WITH AMENDMENT deleting - the SUNDAY HUNTING of MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS.

Thank you for your time, I will be happy to answer any questions.

Webb Johnson