



P.O. Box 501
Huntingtown, Maryland 20639

February 13, 2024

SUPPORT

Senate Bill 508 (Hunting – Nonresident Sika Deer Stamp – Fee Alternation)

The HUNTERS OF MARYLAND, LLC represent the interests of Maryland's hunting community at both the State and local level. Few realize that hunters underwrite almost 100% of all wildlife management and research costs through their purchase of hunting licenses, stamps, and equipment. For the record: (1) hunters do so willingly b/c of **American System of Conservation Funding**, a user-pay model celebrating its 85th Anniversary which also underscores the noble story of hunters as America's original conservationists; and (2) hunting in Maryland is a powerful economic engine as noted in the link below.

<https://sportsmensalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/2020-Economic-Impact-of-Hunting-and-Shooting-Technical-Report-V2.pdf>

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HONORABLE BRIAN J. FELDMAN
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HONORABLE MEMBERS:

The HUNTERS OF MARYLAND, LLC support Senate Bill 508 which would increase the nonresident licensing fee for Sika deer hunting in Maryland from \$25 to \$100. Sika deer inhabit the Lower Eastern Shore counties, with the reported highest density located in the marshes and wetlands of southern Dorchester County.

Sika deer have become highly prized by hunters, both resident and nonresidents alike. The proposed fee increase for Sika deer hunting in Maryland will not negate hunters' quest for Sika deer. The byproduct: more dollars for the DNR administered *State Wildlife Management and Protection Fund*, aka, §10-209 NR. The purpose of the Fund "is to finance the scientific investigation, protection, propagation, and management of wildlife."

Notably, it's Maryland's hunting community – not taxpayers – that underwrite the lion's share of wildlife management/research costs. These added dollars – should SB 508 become enacted – will measurably help in these efforts.