

**SB0508\_DNR\_SUP\_ENT\_4-3-24.pdf**

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Wes Moore, Governor  
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor  
Josh Kurtz, Secretary  
David Goshorn, Deputy Secretary

April 3, 2024

**BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill 508 – Third Reader**

**SHORT TITLE: Hunting – Nonresident Sika Deer Stamp – Fee Alteration - Third Reader**

**DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: SUPPORT**

### **EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT’S POSITION**

The Department supports Senate Bill 508 because it will increase hunting license revenue for the Department of Natural Resources Wildlife and Heritage Service. Revenue generated from the sale of hunting licenses and associated stamps is vital for the department to fulfill its mission of managing wildlife for the Maryland public. The increased revenue generated from SB508 is also eligible for matching federal funds from the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act which provides \$3.00 of federal funds for every \$1.00 of hunting license/stamp sales. The department also supports SB508 because it adjusts the price for the sika deer hunting stamp to be more comparable to what other states charge non-resident hunters for unique hunting opportunities similar to Maryland’s sika deer.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The sika deer hunting stamp was created in 2023 and is required for hunting sika deer in Maryland. Resident hunters are charged \$10.00 for the stamp while non-resident hunters are charged \$25.00. For each stamp sold, the department is also eligible to receive \$30.00 in matching federal funds for resident stamps and \$75.00 for non-resident stamps. Approximately 3,200 non-resident stamps were sold during the 2023-2024 hunting season. While it is difficult to determine exactly how much revenue will be generated by the stamp price increase because of the loss of some non-resident hunters due to the significantly higher stamp cost, it is projected the change could result in over \$750,000 in additional special and matching federal funds for the agency.

There is no other place in North America to hunt wild sika deer. As a result, it is not possible to compare stamp prices directly with other jurisdictions. However, non-resident prices for hunting other limited-opportunity species in other states can easily cost several hundred to several thousand dollars. Hunters currently travel from across North America to pursue sika deer in the marshes on the Eastern Shore.

### **BILL EXPLANATION**

Senate Bill 508 raises the price of a non-resident sika deer hunting stamp from \$25.00 to \$200.00.

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**SenatorBailey\_FAV\_SB508\_House.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jack Bailey

Position: FAV

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

Budget & Taxation Committee



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April 3, 2024

**Senate Bill 508 – Hunting - Nonresident Sika Deer Stamp - Fee Alteration**

Dear Chairman Korman and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to introduce Senate Bill 508. This legislation would increase the nonresident sika deer stamp fee from \$25 to \$200.

Last year, the General Assembly passed legislation which adjusted Maryland's hunting license and stamp fees for the first time in decades. This legislation also created a new stamp for hunting sika deer. In addition to the new revenue generated by these stamps, this also gave us data on how many people are hunting sika deer in our State for the first time.

I continue to hear from Maryland residents who want to hunt sika deer that it is difficult to do so due to the level of demand from out-of-state hunters. This is true, not only in terms of finding land for hunting, but also other elements of our infrastructure, such as parking at public lands which are open for hunting. According to data from the Department of Natural Resources, of the 12,737 individuals who have purchased a sika deer stamp by the end of December, 3,030 of them or 24% were nonresidents.

Senate Bill 508 raises the sika deer stamp fee for nonresidents in order to provide Maryland hunters with more preferential treatment in hunting this Maryland resource. It will also provide additional revenue to DNR, which will be subject to a 3-to-1 federal match in accordance with the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act and ultimately be reinvested in our State's natural resources.

It is important to note that this legislation will have no effect on Maryland hunters. As outlined in the bill, residents will continue to pay the \$10 stamp fee that was established in law last year.

This bill passed the Senate 39-7 and is identical to House Bill 497 as it passed this Committee and the House of Delegates. I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 508. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Bailey".

Senator Jack Bailey