

February 28, 2025

Re SB796 - Dorchester County - Sunday Hunting - Repeal of Time Restrictions

To Whom It May Concern,

I am a landowner and an outdoor enthusiasts and Oppose SB 796.

- **Com•pro•mise: each side making concessions.**

Being surrounded by farms with many acres of woods where deer hunting takes place, our family is aware of risks and always relax on Sundays when being out of doors. We support deer hunting on our property and neighbors as well as other hunting. However, knowing that Sundays in our county is free from all hunters, gives us peace of mind.

- **Hunters' Time in the Woods.**

Imagine you are a deer hunter who's waited all month to hunt in a blind early one morning. The conditions you want is a very quiet environment so that the deer are not spooked. Now imagine unsuspecting joggers, chatty walkers, bicycles bouncing along, talking trail riders with possible bells to scare the deer from spooking the horses) going by the unseen hunter.

Needless to say, any hunter would be frustrated with the situation. Hunters would rather have a dedicated time slot where they can trust that folks aren't overlapping in the shared or nearby natural resources.

- **Crop Damage.**

Farmers can take a crop damage permit for year round hunting, seven days a week. The argument that farmers aren't able to hunt year round is true, but they do have from September - April to hunt deer anytime after the crops are in. That is when many farmers make additional money by leasing their land to hunters.

- **Road kill**

- Deer being struck by vehicles peaks during rutting season (October & November) when there already exists 14 days for rifle hunting in November (www.iii.org/). The bucks are chasing the does day and night to mate and many are crossing roads and highways. Any other time in the year the road kill numbers drop off substantially.

- **Outdoor Citizens in the Woods.**

The Joggers, walkers, cyclists, riders and birdwatchers want the security of knowing they are not interfering with another activity that would scare them or put them in harms way.

These bills that are being presented probably don't speak for the population that do not hunt and therefore don't know that their hunter-free Sundays are at risk of evaporating. We landowners and riders are mostly aware as we've seen the erosion of a "weapon-free zone".

- **Sharing Resources**

Let's be honest, this is about how to share our natural resources with guns/weapons with other citizens who do not carry weapons. Weapons will always intimidate non-weapon citizens. Weapons need a safety zone around them that's realistic. Non-hunting citizens need one day/week where there isn't an overlap with hunters. Hunters now have 6.3 days/week to carry weapons around unknowing outdoors men, women and families.

- **Safely Zones:**

Point a weapon in any direction, imagine the circle and you have a range of 50-200 yards around the hunter where they can swing their aim.

50 yards might be the current safety zone, but I know first hand that isn't enough even with a shot gun. Our duck hunters were raining their shot gun pellets on our house and we're 100 yards away.

Technology is always improving these weapons for a clean kill. Cross Bows are getting up to 70 yards (bestcrossbows.com), rifles bullets on average will travel 500 yards (nrafamily.org) and muzzleloaders anywhere between 50-200 yards (deeranddeerhunting.com).

- **Com•pro•mise: each side making concessions.**

This SB 796 is trying to undo a compromise that already exists from hunters and non-hunters. Keep part of Sundays weapon-free!

Thank you for considering my point of view.

Regards,
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