

Please vote against SB417, the Carroll Sunday Hunting bill 2025-02

Good afternoon! I am Judy Thacher and my husband Art, own a lovely 6 acre horse farmette in Westminster, MD. For many years we have ridden organized trail rides in Carroll County as members of Carroll County Equestrian Council. We have been members of TROT for years.

Once again, there is a Carroll County Sunday hunting bill being presented. Once again, we average citizens are here testifying that it is completely unfair of the well-funded hunting industry – which already has 6 days a week for shooting lethal weapons outdoors – to try to get the 7th day, which traditionally has been reserved as the only day of the week for the other 98% of the population who are not hunters to enjoy our area's lovely green areas without the fear of being shot at.

Back 25 years ago when Sunday Hunting was first being seriously lobbied for, then-Governor Parris Glendening expressed precisely those sentiments in a very well-worded and impassioned plea -- to retain that one safe-outside day. And it is even more true today, when the value of outdoor exercise and communing with nature is even more recognized.

I will not reiterate – but 100% endorse – the data and arguments Jane Siegler Christy Claggett and others will be presenting.

I just want to note that I am one of the many outdoor enthusiasts who has been shot at while recreating on our horses – in fact, shot at on two separate occasions. That was not a nice experience. Evidently none of those “great hunters” recognized that my white riding helmet, orange safety vest, and white horse below me do not look exactly like a five point deer. One of my favorite Delegates here in Annapolis had a similar experience of being shot at while recruiting in an area park.

Let me also point out that if hunters are so unsuccessful in the 6 days/week they already have and endanger non-hunter outdoor enthusiasts, why think the 7th day will solve any deer problem?

Maybe the bill advocates live in an area so rural that their proposed increased hunting would not endanger neighbors, but in much of Carroll County, private property abuts parkland right near to where the trails are laid out and also abuts other people's private property. And especially Carroll County where the myriad wonderful parks are a destination riding venue for so many residents of the state, it seems most inappropriate and dangerous to take away the one day a week when outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy the outdoors without fear of being shot at.

Please, vote against SB5417, to keep Sunday safe for the vast majority of the population, us non-hunters, who want to be able to recreate outdoors without the fear of being shot at on one day per week, when hunters have already claimed the other six days. Thank you.

Judy & Art Thacher