

William Harbold
429 Myers Road
Westminster, MD 21157
waharbold@gmail.com
443-789-8404

28 February 2025

Maryland State Senate
Annapolis, MD

To whom it may concern:

I am a Maryland resident and a lifelong hunter, and I do not support this bill, specifically the section pertaining to the phasing out of lead ammunition for hunting in Maryland. As far as I can tell, this is an attempt toward a functional ban on hunting with firearms in our state. I do not have an opinion on the portions of this bill that pertain to fox chasing or the deer management assistance program.

Phasing out the use of lead ammunition would effectively ban small game hunting with a .22 caliber rim-fire rifle, as there are currently no lead-free alternatives. This would leave only shotgun shells loaded with steel shot as the only option for small game hunting, making the pursuit significantly more expensive.

This bill, if passed, would effectively ban the use of traditional muzzle-loading rifles, as they use entirely lead ammunition. This would keep me from participating in any of Maryland's muzzle-loader deer hunting seasons, as I do not own or hunt with any modern muzzle-loaders that are capable of using non-lead ammunition.

If this bill becomes law, it will severely restrict the number of calibers/gauges available for deer and bear hunting with center-fire rifles and shotguns. Many older rifles with slower twist barrels will not stabilize longer copper (non-lead) bullets, and in many cases, there is no non-lead ammunition made for them. For example, there are no commercially available non-lead loads in 30-30 Winchester (one of the most popular whitetail deer cartridges and one that I hunt with almost exclusively during Maryland's firearms seasons for whitetail deer) and there is only one non-lead shotgun slug available, which itself is not compatible with many older shotguns.

This bill will do little to nothing to improve the health and safety of Marylanders and instead will make it difficult if not impossible for Marylanders who hunt with firearms to continue their traditional pursuits to recreate, feed their families, and assist in managing Maryland's wildlife populations.

I ask that you please vote against this bill or at least amend it to exclude the phasing out of non-lead ammunition.

Thank you for your consideration.



William Harbold