

SB 417 Sunday Hunting in Carroll County
Position: OPPOSED

Good afternoon Senator Feldman and Members of the Energy, Education, and Environment Committee:

I am a member of Trail Riders of Today (TROT) a 40 year old non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of open spaces for equestrians and the general public. Our members come from across the state, but we particularly enjoy riding in Carroll County (Patapsco Valley, Piney Run, and Morgan Run are top destinations).

I oppose any further expansion of hunting on Sunday since this would diminish the ability or desirability of the general public to recreate in public open space. These areas are supported by taxes -- and in some cases, hard labor by trail users. It is unfair that the 1.9% of Marylanders who hunt deter others from access to the outdoors.

My husband is an avid birdwatcher and a member of one of the 15 local chapters of the Maryland Ornithological Society. Weekly bird walks are scheduled for almost every Sunday. Scouts go camping on weekends. Dogwalkers, bikers, hikers,

photographers – labelled “wildlife watchers” by the US Fish and Wildlife census in their latest 2022 report, comprise 73% of the population. The census notes that this group also spends 5-6 times more money enjoying their preferred pastimes than do hunters.

Doctors across the country are praising the health benefits of getting outside in nature. People of all ages benefit from being outside– in their backyards or in public spaces – but hunting discourages outdoor activities at a time when we need to get outside and away from our handheld devices the most.

Since a statewide poll in 2018 showed that nearly 76% of all Marylanders opposed Sunday hunting while barely 22% were in favor, it is clear that this bill should be defeated. The majority should rule!

Thank you very much for your kind time and attention.

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