

JACK BAILEY  
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Calvert and St. Mary's Counties

Budget & Taxation Committee



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
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February 4, 2025

**Senate Bill 100 – Natural Resources – Pursuing Wounded Deer After Legal Hunting Hours –  
Authorization**

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to introduce Senate Bill 100, which would authorize hunters who wound a deer during legal hunting hours to pursue and dispatch the deer humanely after legal hunting hours.

Currently, if a deer is shot and runs off, the hunter has only until the end of legal hunting hours to track and kill the deer with a weapon. Deer that are wounded but not killed face one of two fates – either the deer will slowly die from its injuries, or it will be attacked and eaten by predatory animals such as coyotes. I strongly believe in the right of Marylanders to hunt in our State, but also that hunters have the ethical obligation to do so in a humane manner. Under existing law, a hunter who casts the rays of an artificial light while possessing or having under control a firearm or other implement by which any deer could be killed faces a prison sentence of up to six months, a fine of up to \$2,000, and must have their hunting license revoked for at least two years. I do not believe that a hunter pursuing a wounded deer to ensure it can be dispatched humanely should face these stringent penalties.

Our laws include limitations on when hunting can occur for good reason, but I believe that this bill will help us to find a balance by granting hunters authorization in this limited and specific circumstance to be able to kill a deer that they wounded to ensure it has a more humane ending than it would otherwise. This bill specifies that the deer can only be killed using the means authorized during that season to kill the deer, so firearms could only be used during firearms season and bows and arrows can only be used during bow hunting season. This bill requires the Department of Natural Resources to adopt regulations to ensure that DNR has flexibility in how this authorization is implemented and enforced.

I am submitting with this bill an amendment to make clarifying changes, specifically to make it clear that a hunter is permitted to use a light to pursue a deer in accordance with this bill. I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 100 with this amendment. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Bailey", written over a horizontal line.

Senator Jack Bailey