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Committee

Subcommittees

Public Health and
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Health Occupations and
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony

HB1024- Agriculture - Catastrophic Damage Caused by Deer

Environment and Transportation Committee

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

What This Bill Does

HB1024 Authorizing the Department of Agriculture to take extraordinary measures to control local deer populations and prevent future crop loss if the Department determines that deer have caused catastrophic damage to a field and defines "catastrophic damage" as the loss of 50% or more of crops from a single field.

Why We Need This Bill

There are several farms where the land has been rendered useless due to deer damage. The circumstances are far too extreme for any management protocol utilized by the Department of Natural Resources. In the rare cases where this occurs, the MD Department of Agriculture would be authorized to reduce the deer herd attributed to this damage by the use of any means necessary. This would include harvesting at times not currently permitted under crop damage permits. The bill:

- Allow for hunters and shooters to harvest deer that may not be included on a crop damage permit.
- Allow for nighttime shooting without a cooperator's permit.
- Use whatever means that determined to be efficient and effective.

All deer harvested would be reported to the Department of Natural Resources by the Department of Agriculture.

I respectfully ask the Committee for a favorable vote on HB1024