



To: **The Honorable Brian Feldman**
Chair, Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee

Re: **Senate Bill 796 – Dorchester County – Sunday Hunting Time Restrictions - Repeal**

House Bill 654 – Wicomico County – Sunday Hunting Time Restrictions - Repeal

Position: **Support**

Date: **February 28, 2025**

Dear Chairman Feldman and Chairman Korman,

As the Assistant Manager, Mid-Atlantic States for the Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation (CSF), and as a lifelong Maryland resident and avid hunter, I respectfully urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 796 (SB 796) and House Bill 654 (HB 654). SB 796 and HB 654 will remove the time restrictions in which a person may hunt game birds and game mammals on Sundays in Dorchester and Wicomico Counties. Such time restrictions continue to be a barrier for access and opportunities for sportsmen and women, and can be found detrimental to their recruitment, retention, and reactivation (R3).

Founded in 1989, CSF is the informed authority across outdoor issues and serves as the primary conduit for influencing public policy. Working with the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus (CSC), the Governors Sportsmen's Caucus (GSC), and the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses (NASC), CSF gives a voice to hunters, anglers, recreational shooters, and trappers on Capitol Hill and throughout state capitals advocating on vital outdoor issues that are the backbone of our nation's conservation legacy.

Maryland has experienced success with the addition of Sunday hunting for most game species since 2003 when it was first authorized. However, the current framework for Sunday hunting has resulted in a confusing patchwork of various allowances by County. Some counties, such as Dorchester and Wicomico, require hunters to end their hunt by 10:30 a.m., removing the possibility of an afternoon or evening hunt, which for some species, like the [White-tailed deer](#), is a very productive timeframe.

Access is a major limiting factor hindering participation in hunting, and restrictions on Sunday hunting provide a temporal-access barrier to youth and others that work or attend school throughout the week and are often involved in extra-curricular activities on Saturdays. Individuals and families continue to seek

the ability to participate in safe and healthy recreation. Hunting not only provides residents with that chance, but it also offers a chance to harvest fresh and healthy meat for consumption and nourishment. Additionally, hunting is the most cost-effective means of wildlife population management. CSF strongly supports measures that increase access and opportunity for sportsmen and women that are in line with science-based wildlife management.¹

Sportsmen and women are the primary funders of state-level conservation efforts in the state and are thus an important constituency that provides benefits for all Marylanders. In 2024 alone, Maryland's sportsmen and women generated more than \$15.5 million dollars for conservation funding in Maryland through revenue derived from license sales and excise taxes on sporting-related goods in the unique “user pays – public benefits” structure known as the American System of Conservation Funding. This funding provides the lion's share of funding for the Maryland DNR and supports the agency's land acquisitions, wildlife and habitat management programs, and many other programs that benefit all citizens of the “Old-Line State”.

Additionally, increasing opportunities on Sundays will allow private landowners, farmers, and others to diversify their income sources by allowing more time for hunting on their land, thereby helping to provide a capital influx into rural economies that were hardest hit by the recent recession. Creating additional opportunities will also encourage out-of-state hunting-related tourism and further bolster rural economies throughout the state.

In closing, repealing laws that continue to prohibit hunting on Sundays will likely increase participation, and license sales by extension, have a positive impact on the state's economy, and will strengthen the Old-Line State's deep outdoor heritage. In addition, this bill will provide more opportunities for friends and families to spend time afield, resulting in the strengthening of relationships, creating bonds and memories, as well as passing down traditions to the next generation. For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 796 and House Bill 654.

Sincerely,



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¹ [Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation 2023 Issue Brief – Sunday Hunting Restrictions](#)