



Maryland Bowhunters Society

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THE HONORABLE MARC KORMAN, CHAIR

Honorable Members of House Environment & Transportation Committee

RE: SUPPORT FOR HOUSE BILL 654

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee

My name is Maribeth Kulynycz, I am here on behalf of the Maryland Bowhunter's Society (MBS), in support of HB 654. MBS is an organization that has been dedicated to preserving the history and ensuring the future of archery and bowhunting in Maryland since 1977. MBS promotes and provides safety and education for all who wish to enjoy the outdoors.

The majority of Sundays affected by this bill will be archery only. Archery is considered one of the safest means of hunting and statistics stand by that. It requires patience, precision, skills, and time. Every minute spent afield increases the chance of success.

In archery the distance for taking an ethical shot is greatly decreased when compared to traditional firearms. Arrows are usually sent from an elevated platform. At that angle, even with the strength of modern-day bows, the flight of the arrow does not continue on beyond the target range, the arrow will stick into the ground once it is released. These aspects and many others allow bowhunters to utilize much smaller tracts of land safely. Those who bow hunt do not take the responsibility lightly and the lack of incident reports across the country attests to that.

It is important to note that there are very few natural predators in the state of Maryland. Research shows that hunting is the best means we have to help maintain a healthy deer herd. Healthy is the key word, when the land cannot sustain the animals we encounter many other problems, like disease, automobile accidents, and crop damage. And this leads to extreme means of thinning the herd like nighttime crop damage shooting and hiring sharp shooters.

Many would ask why the 10:30 time limit isn't sufficient? Deer bed down during the day and are most active in the evenings when they can feed and move under cover of darkness. When it comes to hunting farm fields, in order to access that field in the early morning, hours pushes every single deer out. They will go to their daytime bedding areas and will not return until evening. Hunting afternoons gives the strongest chance of catching deer coming from their daytime areas to the fields where they will spend the evening.

Hunters play a pivotal role in the efforts to maintain a balance. Only 2% of the population of Maryland hunts. I think it's sad that only 2% of Maryland residents know how to provide for themselves with this healthy, organic, renewable resource. That's a lot of responsibility on hunters to produce effective numbers, and they should have every opportunity available to aid them in the efforts to do so.

Because in reality most people in today's economy have to work 5 or 6 days a week. Kids are in school, and Saturdays are filled with sports and family events. Sunday is often the only day people are free to enjoy the outdoors. And many would like the opportunity to bow hunt on their only day off, and get their families involved, especially the kids.

So many of today's youth are stuck inside and glued to a phone screen. We are living in a stagnant society, and the science behind how that is affecting the future generations is alarming. They need opportunities to be in nature, to run, jump, move, learn new skills, and expand their knowledge in ways technology can not provide. With safe and educated mentors and family members at their side, this gives them a chance to learn about traditions and the ways of people who walked this land long before us.

Increasing access and opportunities for people will not only help keep the roads safer, protect farmers, help hard working citizens provide for their families, but it also helps ensure the longevity of the land and the animals we share it with.

Maribeth Kulynycz

Executive Secretary of the Maryland Bowhunter's Society