



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony in Support of HB 483
Income Tax Credit - Venison Donation - Alterations**

Chairman Atterbeary, Vice-Chair Wilkins, and honorable members of the Ways and Means Committee:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to present House Bill 483 - Income Tax Credit - Venison Donation - Alterations. This bill repeals the limitation on the maximum tax credit an individual may claim for donating venison to food banks or other charitable organizations.

According to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, farmers across Maryland have faced \$10 million in economic losses due to wildlife damage, 77% of which are caused by deer. In addition to agricultural impact, the Department of Natural Resources reported that in 2021, 30,000-35,000 collisions were caused by deer. Unchecked deer populations eat and damage forest understories, hindering reforestation efforts and our state's goal to plant 5 million trees by 2031. Deer control is also critical in the mitigation of Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses.

The harvest of antlerless deer is a cornerstone of Maryland's deer management program, relying on the participation of civilian hunters. Currently, Maryland hunters can claim \$75 per donated deer, with a maximum tax credit of \$300 for any taxable year. This has been a successful program, incentivizing hunters to hunt and harvest deer while also controlling the states' deer populations and contributing to food banks. By repealing the \$300 limit, we can increase the effectiveness of this program and mitigate the economic losses caused by deer overpopulation in our state.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask for a favorable report on House Bill 483.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Natalie Ziegler".

Delegate Natalie Ziegler
Howard & Montgomery Counties, District 9A