

February 3, 2026

The Honorable Brian Feldman
Chairman, Senate Education, Energy & Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: SB 181 – Lead Ammunition – Phase-Out – FAVORABLE

Dear Chairman Feldman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Debra Merskin, and I am a wildlife rehabilitation volunteer and a professor. I am writing in strong support of SB 181, the phase-out of lead ammunition for hunting, for the following reasons:

- There is no safe level of lead. It is a powerful neurotoxin that bioaccumulates in the central nervous system of humans and wildlife
- Those who consume game animals killed with lead ammunition consume virtually undetectable, but physiologically potent amounts of lead. Research demonstrates the impact this has on health, particularly that of children and pregnant women.
- I have seen firsthand what a lead-poisoned eagle (and other raptors) looks like. They cannot stand, are emaciated, and are neurologic. They can rarely be saved. This will result in fewer birds available to reproduce (a reminder of what nearly happened to the California Condor).

I respectfully urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 181.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Debra Merskin, PhD
University of Oregon