



Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor
Josh Kurtz, Secretary
David Goshorn, Deputy Secretary

March 10, 2026

BILL NUMBER: SENATE BILL 879 - FIRST READER

SHORT TITLE: BALTIMORE CITY – NATURAL RESOURCES – SUNDAY DEER HUNTING AND ARCHERY HUNTING SAFETY ZONES

DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: LETTER OF INFORMATION

EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT’S POSITION

The Department of Natural Resources offers the following information concerning SB 879.

Opening Sundays for deer hunting is an important tool for managing their population. Lower deer numbers result in less agricultural crop damage, fewer deer-vehicle collisions, and reduced conflicts with humans in urban and suburban settings like Baltimore City. Many hunters only have time to hunt on the weekends, so adding Sunday opportunities significantly increases the amount of time they have to hunt. Sunday hunting can be especially important if the weather causes unfavorable hunting conditions on the Saturday of the same weekend. Sunday hunting is also an important hunter recruitment tool for the department as it often doubles the weekend hunting time available and assists with keeping hunters active in the field.

SB 879 also adds Baltimore City to the list of 13 counties that have a 50-yard safety zone for archery hunting. The standard distance is 150 yards. Hunters may not hunt within an established safety zone or shoot at game within an established safety zone unless they have prior written permission from the owner or occupants of any dwelling within the zone. The department has not received a significant number of complaints associated with the reduced 50-yard zone where it is established.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Sunday hunting for deer is currently open in 20 of 23 counties to varying degrees. Some counties allow Sunday deer hunting on all Sundays during the season, while other counties only allow deer hunting on three Sundays. Sunday hunting has not created significant complaints to the department since 2003 when Sunday hunting was first allowed. Hunters have harvested over 125,000 deer on Sundays since becoming a legal hunting day.

BILL EXPLANATION

SB 879 opens archery hunting for deer in Baltimore City on each Sunday of the deer archery season. It also establishes a 50-yard safety zone for archery hunting within city limits.

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