



March 2, 2026

RE: Opposition for House Bill 1067

Chair Korman and Honorable Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

On behalf of Safari Club International (SCI), I write to respectfully oppose House Bill 1067 and unnecessary attempts to ban traditional ammunition for hunting in Maryland. SCI is dedicated to protecting the freedom to hunt and promoting wildlife conservation worldwide. Our organization, along with active members throughout the state, strongly opposes this legislation that would restrict hunting, access, and hinder conservation and management efforts within the state.

For your consideration, please see the included resolution from the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) that recognizes the need to provide best practices on the use of lead ammo and tackle, and adopts the [Voluntary Best Management Practices \(BMPs\) for Reducing Unintended Ingestion of Lead Ammunition and Tackle Residues in Wildlife \(also included for your review\)](#) developed by the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife agencies. AFWA represents North America's fish and wildlife agencies – **including the Maryland Wildlife and Heritage Service** – to advance sound, science-based management and conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitats in the public interest.

Additionally, please find “A Report of the New York State Lead Ammunition Working Group” included for your review. The participants in the Working Group included the New York State Department of Health, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Audubon New York, Cornell University Wildlife Health Program, Venison Donation Coalition, and New York State Conservation Council. The report acknowledges a lead ammunition ban “would be challenging to advance and based on research conducted by the Working Group would come with significant social costs, potentially compromising the effectiveness of other conservation efforts” (pg. 4). Page 23 begins an entire section on potential legislative or regulatory restrictions on lead ammunition and goes on to state that “Voluntary and incentivized programs promoting the use of non-lead ammunition in other areas of the country have had high rates of conversion and success at minimizing secondary mortality of scavenging wildlife that ingest lead fragments from gut piles of harvested big game animals”. The recommended actions from the Working Group included “advancing strategic educational outreach...” and “developing and disseminating the best management practices...”. They did not recommend pursuing a statutory or regulatory ban on lead-based ammunition.

It's important to note that lead is used commercially in several forms. The form in ammunition – which is metallic – is not the same and is less easily absorbed by the body, than the form found in paint or gasoline.

Mandating non-traditional ammunition for hunting – especially at a time when ammunition can be hard to find and more expensive, particularly for certain calibers – is unnecessary, unwarranted, and will undoubtedly hurt hunter recruitment and retention in the state as well as whitetail deer management.



States throughout the country are grappling with ways to increase hunter participation and protect crucial conservation funding, and these restrictions only add additional barriers to entry for hunters, especially new, novice, youth, or rural hunters.

Not only is access to, and availability of, non-lead-based ammo limited, but the price difference between lead ammunition and non-traditional ammunition can provide yet another barrier for those wishing to hunt throughout Maryland. This bill would disproportionately affect those who may not be able to find and/or afford more expensive non-lead ammunition as well as hunters in rural areas throughout the state. The result of prohibiting lead ammunition is that hunters will simply not have the ammunition they need to hunt, or purchasing ammunition will become considerably more difficult, both of which stand to produce fewer hunters afield and fewer conservation dollars generated through the sale of licenses, tags and ammunition.

Maintaining America's large number of hunters and target shooters is crucial to maintaining the revenues necessary to sustain abundant wildlife and wildlife habitat—for both game and non-game—conservation programs as well as access related programs. Funds generated through the sale of hunting licenses, tags, permits, and ammunition all go to the benefit of Maryland's natural resources.

SCI strongly believes blanket bans are not good policy and any efforts concerning non-traditional ammo should focus on **educational, voluntary, and incentive-based efforts in targeted, site-specific areas where there is a documented impact.**

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important measure.

Sincerely,

W. Laird Hamberlin, CEO – Safari Club International/Foundation