



## Maryland Farm Bureau

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February 4, 2026

**To:** House Environment and Transportation Committee

**From:** Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

**RE:** **Support of HB186 Natural Resources - Bow Hunting - Sundays**

On behalf of the more than 7,000 member families of the Maryland Farm Bureau, I respectfully submit this written testimony in support of HB 186 – Natural Resources – Bow Hunting – Sundays. This legislation would allow statewide Sunday deer hunting during the archery season on private land, as well as Sunday turkey hunting.

Deer overpopulation and the resulting crop loss remain among the most significant challenges facing Maryland farmers. In the most recent USDA survey on wildlife-related crop damage in Maryland, deer accounted for roughly 77% of total reported losses. Conversations with farmers across the state consistently reinforce these findings. On average, deer damage is estimated to cost producers approximately \$50 per acre. With more than 1.2 million crops statewide, this equates to as much as \$60 million in annual agricultural losses attributable directly to deer.

One of the most effective and widely recognized management tools for reducing deer numbers is increasing hunter participation and harvest. However, for many hunters, particularly those working full-time, weekends offer the only practical opportunity to be in the woods. Allowing statewide Sunday hunting expands access, improves hunter recruitment and retention, and helps the state meet its wildlife management goals. Neighboring states that permit Sunday hunting have documented increases in hunter activity and corresponding benefits to herd management.

HB 186 provides a targeted, commonsense approach by expanding Sunday hunting opportunities on private land, where landowners can manage activity and safety. This bill will give farmers and property owners another tool to mitigate crop loss while supporting responsible wildlife conservation practices.

For these reasons, Maryland Farm Bureau urges the committee to issue a favorable report on HB 186.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Hough', with a horizontal line above it.

Director of Government Relations

Please contact Tyler Hough, [though@marylandfb.org](mailto:though@marylandfb.org), with any questions