



P.O. Box 501  
Huntingtown, Maryland 20639

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## HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

### SUPPORT FOR HOUSE BILL 186 (Bow Hunting – Sundays)

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The HUNTERS OF MARYLAND represent the interests of Maryland's hunting community at both the State and local level. Few realize that hunters underwrite 100% of all wildlife management/research costs through their purchase of hunting license fees/ equipment. For the record, hunters do so willingly b/c of **American System of Conservation Funding**, a user-pay model celebrating its 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary which also underscores the noble story of hunters as America's original conservationists.

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This issue is fundamentally about property rights, fairness, and responsible wildlife management as explained herein.

**FIRST**, private landowners should have the right to decide how their property is used. Allowing Sunday hunting on private land respects landowner choice and does not restrict public access to public lands.

**SECOND**, this change promotes fairness for working families. Many hunters work six days a week and have limited opportunities to participate in outdoor recreation. Prohibiting Sunday hunting effectively excludes them. Neighboring states already allow Sunday hunting, placing Maryland hunters at a disadvantage.

**THIRD**, regulated hunting is a critical wildlife management tool. Maryland continues to face challenges with overabundant deer populations that contribute to crop damage, vehicle collisions, and forest degradation. Expanding hunting opportunities improves management outcomes while maintaining all existing seasons, bag limits, and safety requirements.

**FOURTH**, there are economic benefits. Hunters support rural economies and conservation funding through license fees and excise taxes that directly benefit wildlife and habitat conservation.

Importantly, Sunday hunting on private property is a balanced and limited approach. It requires landowner permission, maintains safety zones, and preserves public land access for non-hunters. Maryland already has strong hunter education and enforcement programs, and those safeguards remain unchanged.

**IN CLOSING**, allowing Sunday hunting on private property respects landowners, supports conservation, and reflects the realities of modern work schedules—while maintaining safety and consideration for all Marylanders.