

## Testimony

### MD SB 1067 – Hunting - Phase-Out of Lead Ammunition

February 27, 2026

Delegate Marc Korman, Chairman  
House Environment & Transportation Committee  
250 Taylor Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: HB 1067 - Hunting - Phase-Out of Lead Ammunition - FAVORABLE

Dear Chairman Korman and Vice Chair Guyton:

I am Dr. F. Elaine Leslie, an Executive Member of the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks caring for America's most valuable natural and cultural resources, many of which are located right here in the state of Maryland.

In my career, I have worked as an NPS Scientist and Agency Chief of Biological Resources. I am an experienced wildlife biologist for over 45 years. I have been working on the impacts of lead to wildlife since the mid 90's. I have worked in collaboration on this issue from California condors to bald and golden eagles from the west coast, to Midwest to the Atlantic coast. I have been impacted by coming to the assistance of dying condors and bald eagles from the impacts of lead ingestion from discarded gut piles, and rushed others to veterinarians for the painful treatment of chelation-some animals recovering, some not.

Our collective concern today is certainly Maryland's wildlife as well as the human risk factor. There is so much we may not know about what humans are facing from meat ingestion of spent lead in hunted game carcasses, but more studies are coming to light on a regular basis. However, there is definitive science and a plethora of studies and peer-reviewed publications on the impacts to wildlife.

- For humans and wildlife and the environment, no amount of lead is safe. We do know that.
- Lead phase-out efforts is a solid first step to securing the perpetuation of healthy wildlife in Maryland.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service banned lead shot for waterfowl hunting in 1991. California phased out all lead ammunition with documented beneficial effects on wildlife and with little or no disruption in hunting participation. It's evident we would not have species such as trumpeter swans, loons and the diversity of waterfowl we have today without that 1991 ban.

Today, Maryland can focus on the long game-aligning your efforts to achieve larger, more meaningful results that take time-turning concepts into action. This requires strategic thinking as presented in this bill. Maryland will be demonstrating responsible, humane, ethical, and meaningful conservation actions and leadership in the state, and be a model for the nation.

It's not perfect. No conservation system or policies are. But by passing this bill, Maryland and its hunting communities are moving forward, intentionally, with an eye on its natural resource conservation future. In this year celebrating our country's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our founding, enabling protections through the passage of this bill for our national symbol, the bald eagle and many other species, would be an event fitting celebration!

I respectfully urge the Committee to issue a favorable report.  
Thank you for your consideration and time to address this important issue.

Sincerely,  
Elaine F. Leslie, National Park Service, Retired

Coalition to Protect America's National Parks