

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Institute for Legislative Action

11250 WAPLES MILL ROAD

FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA 22030



NRA

March 2, 2026

National Rifle Association

11250 Waples Mill Road

Fairfax, VA 22030

October 24, 2025

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is John Weber and I represent the National Rifle Association and our members in Maryland. The NRA is opposed to House Bill 1067. This legislation imposes a sweeping phase out of lead and lead based ammunition for hunting, creating unnecessary burdens on law-abiding hunters, substantial economic and practical challenges, and no demonstrable public safety or environmental benefit.

First, Maryland hunters already have effective tools to minimize environmental impacts without mandates. Many responsibly use nonlead alternatives where appropriate, and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) promotes best practices for game processing and carcass disposal. HB 1067 ignores these efforts and assumes a one size fits all ban is needed, despite lacking evidence of widespread lead poisoning from hunting in Maryland. Peer-reviewed studies cited in the bill's preamble are often generalized or based on other regions, local data does not show a crisis.

Second, the bill creates a complex and costly bureaucracy that disproportionately affects everyday hunters rather than addressing real issues. It requires DNR to adopt phased regulations for different game species and weapons, including exceptions only when nonlead ammunition is "not commercially available." This vague standard invites disputes, litigation, and uneven enforcement. Hunters must navigate availability checks, potentially facing penalties for using lead ammo in good faith. Nonlead options like copper or tungsten are often 2-3 times more expensive, less effective in some calibers (especially for muzzleloaders and shotguns), and harder to find, particularly in rural areas. This could price out low income families who rely on hunting for food.

Third, HB 1067 overlooks practical enforcement problems and risks unintended consequences. Requiring nonlead for all game by 2029 means DNR must monitor compliance in the field, diverting resources from conservation and education to inspections and fines. The bill's exceptions for certain weapons are narrow and temporary, ignoring that nonlead alternatives may underperform ballistically, leading to more wounded game and ethical concerns. Wildlife populations could suffer if hunters reduce participation due to costs or frustrations.

Finally, by forcing a phase-out based on overstated risks, HB 1067 erodes hunters' rights and traditions without proportional benefits. Maryland's venison donation programs already include

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guidelines to minimize lead fragments, and human health studies show minimal exposure from properly processed game meat. This bill magnifies speculative concerns while ignoring proven solutions like education and incentives.

In closing, Maryland has robust wildlife management tools through DNR regulations, voluntary nonlead use, and existing laws. HB 1067 does not meaningfully enhance those tools. For these reasons, NRA respectfully urges the committee to oppose House Bill 1067.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Weber". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

John Weber
State Director
NRA-ILA