

Marc Korman HB780.pdf

Uploaded by: A.Kaye Kenney

Position: FAV



WICOMICO COUNTY, MARYLAND

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

P.O. BOX 870

SALISBURY, MARYLAND 21803-0870

410-548-4801

FAX: 410-548-4803

Bunky Luffman
Director of Administration

Steven S. Lakin
Assistant Director of Administration

Julie M. Giordano
County Executive

March 2, 2026

The Honorable Marc Korman
Environment and Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support for Legislation Repealing Sunday Hunting Restrictions in Wicomico County HB780

Dear Delegate Korman and Committee:

I support repealing the current restrictions on Sunday hunting in Wicomico County, particularly on private property. Allowing hunting on Sundays would provide local sportsmen and women with greater flexibility, especially those who work during the week and have limited time to enjoy the outdoors.

Expanded hunting opportunities would also benefit the local economy by increasing spending on hunting-related activities such as equipment purchases, guide services, lodging, dining, and fuel. Hunting tourism and outdoor recreation bring important revenue to rural communities, and allowing Sunday hunting would help keep those dollars in Wicomico County.

Private property owners should have the right to decide how their land is used. Repealing these restrictions respects property rights while supporting responsible wildlife management and conservation.

By modernizing these outdated rules, Wicomico County can better support outdoor traditions, boost economic activity, and provide fair access for hunters while maintaining safety and respect for the community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

WICOMICO COUNTY, MARYLAND



Julie M. Giordano
County Executive

2026-HB780-ENT-SUP-As Amended-WC Sunday Hunting Ti

Uploaded by: Chris Adams

Position: FAV

CHRISTOPHER T. ADAMS
Legislative District 37B
Caroline, Dorchester, Talbot,
and Wicomico Counties

—
Economic Matters Committee

Subcommittees

Business Regulation

Housing and Real Property

Land Use and Zoning

—
Chair

Eastern Shore Delegation



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 405
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3343
800-492-7122 Ext. 3343
Christopher.Adams@house.maryland.gov

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB 780

Wicomico County-Sunday Hunting Time Restrictions-Repeal

As Amended by 753329/1

• ***Why is the Bill being introduced?***

As amended, this local Bill expands hunting rights according to the bill **ON PRIVATE PROPERTY ONLY.**

• ***What does the Bill do?***

The Bill repeals certain time restrictions that apply to hunting of game birds and mammals on Private property currently designated for Sunday Hunting in Wicomico County.

• ***Why is it important to pass now?***

Private property owners are asking the committee for the expansion of this availability to Hunt. By passing this legislation, the committee would be:

- 1) Supporting families who have limited time in their workweek schedule to hunt;
- 2) Advancing deer management goals for farmers who are experiencing significant crop damage;
- 3) Protecting citizens who drive on rural roads from the increasing incidents of deer strikes By car.

2026-HB780-ENT-WC House Delegation Favorable Lette

Uploaded by: Chris Adams

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CHRISTOPHER T. ADAMS
Legislative District 37B
Caroline, Dorchester, Talbot,
and Wicomico Counties

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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 11, 2026

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee
6 Bladen Street, Room 250
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: HB780-Wicomico County-Sunday Hunting Time Restrictions-Repeal

Dear Chair Korman,

This letter is to advise the Environment and Transportation Committee that the above-referenced Bill was voted on by the Wicomico County House Delegation and received a unanimous vote.

The vote of the Delegation members is attached.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Adams".

Christopher T. Adams
Chair
Wicomico County House Delegation

HB780-Amendment-753329-1.pdf

Uploaded by: Chris Adams

Position: FAV



HB0780/753329/1

AMENDMENTS
PREPARED
BY THE
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE
SERVICES

02 MAR 26
12:43:25

BY: Delegate Adams

(To be offered in the Environment and Transportation Committee)

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL 780

(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in lines 4 and 5, strike “and public land designated for Sunday hunting”; and in line 9, strike “10–410(a)” and substitute “10–410(a)(1)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On pages 3 through 6, strike in their entirety the lines beginning with line 9 on page 3 through line 8 on page 6, inclusive.

HB780-FinalReprint with Amendment753329-1.pdf

Uploaded by: Chris Adams

Position: FAV

HOUSE BILL 780

M2
HB 654/25 – ENT

6lr1892
CF 6lr3293

By: **Wicomico County Delegation**
Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2026
Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Wicomico County – Sunday Hunting Time Restrictions – Repeal**

3 FOR the purpose of repealing certain time restrictions that apply to the hunting of game
4 birds and mammals on certain Sundays on private property ~~and public land~~
5 ~~designated for Sunday hunting~~ in Wicomico County; and generally relating to
6 Sunday hunting in Wicomico County.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
8 Article – Natural Resources
9 Section ~~10–410(a)~~ 10–410(a)(1)
10 Annotated Code of Maryland
11 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
13 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

14 **Article – Natural Resources**

15 10–410.

16 (a) (1) (i) The Department may allow a person to hunt on each Sunday of
17 the game bird and game mammal seasons in:

18 1. Allegany County;

19 2. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Calvert
20 County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;

21 3. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Caroline
22 County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;

2 REPRINT OF HOUSE BILL 780 as amended by HB0780/753329/1 03/02/26 at 12:43 PM

1 4. Cecil County;

2 5. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Charles
3 County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;

4 6. Subject to subparagraph (iv) of this paragraph, Dorchester
5 County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;

6 7. Garrett County;

7 8. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Queen
8 Anne's County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;

9 9. St. Mary's County;

10 10. Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, Somerset
11 County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;

12 11. Washington County;

13 12. Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, Worcester
14 County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.; and

15 13. [Subject to subparagraph (v) of this paragraph,] Wicomico
16 County[, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m].

17 (ii) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)10 and 12 of this
18 paragraph do not apply:

19 1. On each Sunday of the deer firearms season; and

20 2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two
21 Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.

22 (iii) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)2, 3, 5, and 8 of this
23 paragraph do not apply:

24 1. On each Sunday during the deer firearms season;

25 2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two
26 Sundays in November during the deer bow hunting season; and

27 3. On each Sunday of the spring turkey hunting season.

28 (iv) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)6 of this paragraph
29 do not apply:

3 REPRINT OF HOUSE BILL 780 as amended by HB0780/753329/1 03/02/26 at 12:43 PM

1 1. On each Sunday of the deer hunting seasons from the first
2 Sunday in October through the second Sunday in January, inclusive; and

3 2. On each Sunday of the spring turkey hunting season.

4 [(v) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)(13) of this
5 paragraph do not apply:

6 1. On the first Sunday of the deer firearms season; and

7 2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two
8 Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.]

9 ~~(2) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer on each Sunday of the~~
10 ~~deer hunting seasons from the first Sunday in October through the second Sunday in~~
11 ~~January, inclusive, in:~~

12 ~~(i) Carroll County; and~~

13 ~~(ii) Frederick County.~~

14 ~~(2) (i) Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, the Department~~
15 ~~may allow a person to hunt deer on each Sunday of the deer hunting seasons from 30~~
16 ~~minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m. in:~~

17 ~~1. Kent County;~~

18 ~~2. Montgomery County; and~~

19 ~~3. Talbot County.~~

20 ~~(ii) The time restrictions under this paragraph do not apply:~~

21 ~~1. To a participant in a junior deer hunt authorized under~~
22 ~~this subtitle;~~

23 ~~2. On one Sunday designated by the Department during the~~
24 ~~deer firearms season;~~

25 ~~3. In Kent County, on each Sunday during the deer bow~~
26 ~~hunting season and the deer muzzle loader season;~~

27 ~~4. In Montgomery County, on one Sunday designated by the~~
28 ~~Department during the deer bow hunting season; and~~

29 ~~5. In Talbot County, on the last three Sundays in October~~
30 ~~and the first two Sundays in November during the bow hunting season.~~

4 REPRINT OF HOUSE BILL 780 as amended by HB0780/753329/1 03/02/26 at 12:43 PM

1 ~~(4) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer during the deer-~~
2 ~~firearms season:~~

3 ~~(i) On each Sunday in Harford County; and~~

4 ~~(ii) On the first Sunday in Anne Arundel County.~~

5 ~~(5) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer during the deer bow-~~
6 ~~hunting season on:~~

7 ~~(i) The last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in~~
8 ~~November in Harford County; and~~

9 ~~(ii) The first Sunday in November in Anne Arundel County.~~

10 ~~(6) The Department may allow a person to hunt turkey on each Sunday of~~
11 ~~the spring turkey hunting season in:~~

12 ~~(i) Carroll County;~~

13 ~~(ii) Kent County; and~~

14 ~~(iii) Talbot County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.~~

15 ~~(7) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subtitle, the Department~~
16 ~~may allow a person with a deer management permit to shoot deer on any Sunday~~
17 ~~throughout the year in accordance with the terms of the permit.~~

18 ~~(8) The Department may allow a person using a State certified raptor to~~
19 ~~hunt game birds or mammals on each Sunday during the open season for the game birds~~
20 ~~or mammals.~~

21 ~~(9) The Department may allow an unarmed person participating in an~~
22 ~~organized fox chase to chase foxes on Sunday.~~

23 ~~(10) The Department may allow a person shooting pen-reared game birds~~
24 ~~or tower-released flighted mallard ducks to hunt on Sunday at a regulated shooting ground~~
25 ~~in accordance with § 10-006 of this title.~~

26 ~~(11) The Department may allow a person who is 16 years old or younger to~~
27 ~~hunt on Sunday if participating in a junior hunt established by the Department in~~
28 ~~accordance with this subtitle.~~

29 ~~(12) Except as provided in paragraphs (8) through (10) of this subsection and~~
30 ~~subject to paragraph (7) of this subsection, a person may not hunt on Sunday in:~~

5 REPRINT OF HOUSE BILL 780 as amended by HB0780/753329/1 03/02/26 at 12:43 PM

- 1 ~~(i) Baltimore City;~~
- 2 ~~(ii) Baltimore County;~~
- 3 ~~(iii) Howard County; or~~
- 4 ~~(iv) Prince George's County;~~

5 ~~(13) A person may not hunt migratory game birds on Sunday.~~

6 ~~(14) A person may not hunt on public land within the State park system on~~
 7 ~~Sunday.~~

8 ~~(15) (i) The Department may not allow a person to hunt on public land~~
 9 ~~designated for hunting by the Department on Sunday except in:~~

- 10 ~~1. Allegany County;~~
- 11 ~~2. Cecil County;~~
- 12 ~~3. Garrett County;~~
- 13 ~~4. St. Mary's County;~~
- 14 ~~5. Washington County;~~
- 15 ~~6. WICOMICO COUNTY;~~
- 16 ~~7. Dorchester County, for turkey during the spring turkey~~
 17 ~~hunting season;~~

18 ~~[7.] 8. Frederick County, for deer from the first Sunday in~~
 19 ~~October through the second Sunday in January of the following year, inclusive;~~

20 ~~[8.] 9. Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, Somerset~~
 21 ~~County, on public land leased to a hunt club from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30~~
 22 ~~a.m.; AND~~

23 ~~[9.] 10. Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph,~~
 24 ~~Worcester County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m. [; and~~

25 ~~10. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Wicomico~~
 26 ~~County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.]~~

27 ~~(ii) The time restrictions under subparagraph [(i)8 and 9] (i)9 AND~~
 28 ~~10 of this paragraph do not apply.~~

6 REPRINT OF HOUSE BILL 780 as amended by HB0780/753329/1 03/02/26 at 12:43 PM

- 1 ~~1. On each Sunday of the deer firearms season; and~~
- 2 ~~2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two~~
- 3 ~~Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.~~
- 4 ~~[(iii) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)10 of this paragraph~~
- 5 ~~do not apply;~~
- 6 ~~1. On the first Sunday of the deer firearms season; and~~
- 7 ~~2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two~~
- 8 ~~Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.]~~

9 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
10 1, 2026.

HB780-WC Council-LOS.pdf

Uploaded by: Chris Adams

Position: FAV



WICOMICO COUNTY, MARYLAND

P.O. BOX 870
SALISBURY, MARYLAND 21803-0870
410-548-4696
FAX: 410-548-7872

WICOMICO COUNTY COUNCIL
John T. Cannon, President/At-Large
Jeff Merritt, Vice-President/District #2
James Winn, At-Large
Shanie Shields, District #1
David Ennis, District #3

Josh Hastings, District #4
Joe Holloway, District #5
Laura Hurley, Council Administrator

March 2, 2026

Environment and Transportation Committee
Attn: The Honorable Delegate Marc Korman, Chair
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Wicomico County – Sunday Hunting Time Restrictions – Repeal; House Bill No. 780

Dear Delegate Korman and Committee Members,

The Wicomico County Council writes in strong support of House Bill No. 780 to repeal the restrictions on Sunday hunting in Wicomico County on private property.

The Council has consistently supported similar efforts in prior sessions to expand hunting opportunities for local sportsmen and women. Removing these restrictions will provide greater flexibility for hunters who may not have availability during the traditional workweek, while also promoting responsible wildlife management. Expanded hunting access will additionally benefit the local economy through increased participation in hunting-related activities, tourism, and outdoor recreation.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

WICOMICO COUNTY, MARYLAND



John T. Cannon, Council President

Enclosure

cc: Wicomico County Council
Wicomico County Executive
Bunky Luffman, Director of Administration

HOUSE BILL 780

M2
HB 654/25 – ENT

6lr1892
CF 6lr3293

By: **Wicomico County Delegation**

Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2026

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Wicomico County – Sunday Hunting Time Restrictions – Repeal**

3 FOR the purpose of repealing certain time restrictions that apply to the hunting of game
4 birds and mammals on certain Sundays on private property and public land
5 designated for Sunday hunting in Wicomico County; and generally relating to
6 Sunday hunting in Wicomico County.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
8 Article – Natural Resources
9 Section 10–410(a)
10 Annotated Code of Maryland
11 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
13 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

14 **Article – Natural Resources**

15 10–410.

16 (a) (1) (i) The Department may allow a person to hunt on each Sunday of
17 the game bird and game mammal seasons in:

18 1. Allegany County;

19 2. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Calvert
20 County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;

21 3. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Caroline
22 County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 1. On each Sunday of the deer hunting seasons from the first
2 Sunday in October through the second Sunday in January, inclusive; and

3 2. On each Sunday of the spring turkey hunting season.

4 [(v) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)(13) of this
5 paragraph do not apply:

6 1. On the first Sunday of the deer firearms season; and

7 2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two
8 Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.]

9 (2) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer on each Sunday of the
10 deer hunting seasons from the first Sunday in October through the second Sunday in
11 January, inclusive, in:

12 (i) Carroll County; and

13 (ii) Frederick County.

14 (3) (i) Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, the Department
15 may allow a person to hunt deer on each Sunday of the deer hunting seasons from 30
16 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m. in:

17 1. Kent County;

18 2. Montgomery County; and

19 3. Talbot County.

20 (ii) The time restrictions under this paragraph do not apply:

21 1. To a participant in a junior deer hunt authorized under
22 this subtitle;

23 2. On one Sunday designated by the Department during the
24 deer firearms season;

25 3. In Kent County, on each Sunday during the deer bow
26 hunting season and the deer muzzle loader season;

27 4. In Montgomery County, on one Sunday designated by the
28 Department during the deer bow hunting season; and

29 5. In Talbot County, on the last three Sundays in October
30 and the first two Sundays in November during the bow hunting season.

1 (4) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer during the deer
2 firearms season:

3 (i) On each Sunday in Harford County; and

4 (ii) On the first Sunday in Anne Arundel County.

5 (5) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer during the deer bow
6 hunting season on:

7 (i) The last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in
8 November in Harford County; and

9 (ii) The first Sunday in November in Anne Arundel County.

10 (6) The Department may allow a person to hunt turkey on each Sunday of
11 the spring turkey hunting season in:

12 (i) Carroll County;

13 (ii) Kent County; and

14 (iii) Talbot County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.

15 (7) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subtitle, the Department
16 may allow a person with a deer management permit to shoot deer on any Sunday
17 throughout the year in accordance with the terms of the permit.

18 (8) The Department may allow a person using a State certified raptor to
19 hunt game birds or mammals on each Sunday during the open season for the game birds
20 or mammals.

21 (9) The Department may allow an unarmed person participating in an
22 organized fox chase to chase foxes on Sunday.

23 (10) The Department may allow a person shooting pen-reared game birds
24 or tower-released flighted mallard ducks to hunt on Sunday at a regulated shooting ground
25 in accordance with § 10-906 of this title.

26 (11) The Department may allow a person who is 16 years old or younger to
27 hunt on Sunday if participating in a junior hunt established by the Department in
28 accordance with this subtitle.

29 (12) Except as provided in paragraphs (8) through (10) of this subsection and
30 subject to paragraph (7) of this subsection, a person may not hunt on Sunday in:

- 1 (i) Baltimore City;
- 2 (ii) Baltimore County;
- 3 (iii) Howard County; or
- 4 (iv) Prince George's County.

5 (13) A person may not hunt migratory game birds on Sunday.

6 (14) A person may not hunt on public land within the State park system on
7 Sunday.

8 (15) (i) The Department may not allow a person to hunt on public land
9 designated for hunting by the Department on Sunday except in:

- 10 1. Allegany County;
- 11 2. Cecil County;
- 12 3. Garrett County;
- 13 4. St. Mary's County;
- 14 5. Washington County;
- 15 6. **WICOMICO COUNTY;**
- 16 7. Dorchester County, for turkey during the spring turkey
17 hunting season;

18 [7.] 8. Frederick County, for deer from the first Sunday in
19 October through the second Sunday in January of the following year, inclusive;

20 [8.] 9. Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, Somerset
21 County, on public land leased to a hunt club from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30
22 a.m.; **AND**

23 [9.] 10. Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph,
24 Worcester County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.]; and

25 10. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Wicomico
26 County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.]

27 (ii) The time restrictions under subparagraph [(i)8 and 9] **(I)9 AND**
28 **10** of this paragraph do not apply:

- 1 1. On each Sunday of the deer firearms season; and
- 2 2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two
- 3 Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.

4 [(iii) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)10 of this paragraph
5 do not apply:

- 6 1. On the first Sunday of the deer firearms season; and
- 7 2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two
- 8 Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.]

9 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
10 1, 2026.

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Uploaded by: Chris Adams

Position: FAV



WICOMICO COUNTY, MARYLAND

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

P.O. BOX 870

SALISBURY, MARYLAND 21803-0870

410-548-4801

FAX: 410-548-4803

Bunky Luffman
Director of Administration

Julie M. Giordano
County Executive

Steven S. Lakin
Assistant Director of Administration

March 2, 2026

The Honorable Marc Korman
Environment and Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support for Legislation Repealing Sunday Hunting Restrictions in Wicomico County HB780

Dear Delegate Korman and Committee:

I support repealing the current restrictions on Sunday hunting in Wicomico County, particularly on private property. Allowing hunting on Sundays would provide local sportsmen and women with greater flexibility, especially those who work during the week and have limited time to enjoy the outdoors.

Expanded hunting opportunities would also benefit the local economy by increasing spending on hunting-related activities such as equipment purchases, guide services, lodging, dining, and fuel. Hunting tourism and outdoor recreation bring important revenue to rural communities, and allowing Sunday hunting would help keep those dollars in Wicomico County.

Private property owners should have the right to decide how their land is used. Repealing these restrictions respects property rights while supporting responsible wildlife management and conservation.

By modernizing these outdated rules, Wicomico County can better support outdoor traditions, boost economic activity, and provide fair access for hunters while maintaining safety and respect for the community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

WICOMICO COUNTY, MARYLAND



Julie M. Giordano
County Executive

WC House Delegation-Vote Tally-HB780-WC-Sunday Hun

Uploaded by: Chris Adams

Position: FAV

CHRISTOPHER T. ADAMS
Legislative District 37B
Caroline, Dorchester, Talbot,
and Wicomico Counties

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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Wicomico County Delegation Vote Tally

House Bill 780

Wicomico County-Sunday Hunting Time Restrictions-Repeal

Please Initial and Date

Name	Approve	Disapprove	Date
Delegate Adams	CA		2/10/26
Delegate Anderson	IA		2/10/26
Delegate Beauchamp	BB		2/10/26
Delegate Hartman	WH		2/10/26
Delegate Hutchinson			2/10/26
Delegate Sample-Hughes	SH		2/10/26

This Legislation is supported by the Wicomico County Council by a consensus vote

Hb0780 John Cannon Wicomico County FAV

Uploaded by: John Cannon

Position: FAV



WICOMICO COUNTY, MARYLAND

P.O. BOX 870
SALISBURY, MARYLAND 21803-0870
410-548-4696
FAX: 410-548-7872

WICOMICO COUNTY COUNCIL
John T. Cannon, President/At-Large
Jeff Merritt, Vice-President/District #2
James Winn, At-Large
Shanie Shields, District #1
David Ennis, District #3

Josh Hastings, District #4
Joe Holloway, District #5
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March 2, 2026

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Attn: The Honorable Delegate Marc Korman, Chair
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Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Wicomico County – Sunday Hunting Time Restrictions – Repeal; House Bill No. 780

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WICOMICO COUNTY, MARYLAND



John T. Cannon, Council President

Enclosure

cc: Wicomico County Council
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Bunky Luffman, Director of Administration

HOUSE BILL 780

M2
HB 654/25 – ENT

6lr1892
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By: **Wicomico County Delegation**

Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2026

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

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21 3. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Caroline
22 County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 1. On each Sunday of the deer hunting seasons from the first
2 Sunday in October through the second Sunday in January, inclusive; and

3 2. On each Sunday of the spring turkey hunting season.

4 [(v) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)(13) of this
5 paragraph do not apply:

6 1. On the first Sunday of the deer firearms season; and

7 2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two
8 Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.]

9 (2) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer on each Sunday of the
10 deer hunting seasons from the first Sunday in October through the second Sunday in
11 January, inclusive, in:

12 (i) Carroll County; and

13 (ii) Frederick County.

14 (3) (i) Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, the Department
15 may allow a person to hunt deer on each Sunday of the deer hunting seasons from 30
16 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m. in:

17 1. Kent County;

18 2. Montgomery County; and

19 3. Talbot County.

20 (ii) The time restrictions under this paragraph do not apply:

21 1. To a participant in a junior deer hunt authorized under
22 this subtitle;

23 2. On one Sunday designated by the Department during the
24 deer firearms season;

25 3. In Kent County, on each Sunday during the deer bow
26 hunting season and the deer muzzle loader season;

27 4. In Montgomery County, on one Sunday designated by the
28 Department during the deer bow hunting season; and

29 5. In Talbot County, on the last three Sundays in October
30 and the first two Sundays in November during the bow hunting season.

1 (4) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer during the deer
2 firearms season:

3 (i) On each Sunday in Harford County; and

4 (ii) On the first Sunday in Anne Arundel County.

5 (5) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer during the deer bow
6 hunting season on:

7 (i) The last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in
8 November in Harford County; and

9 (ii) The first Sunday in November in Anne Arundel County.

10 (6) The Department may allow a person to hunt turkey on each Sunday of
11 the spring turkey hunting season in:

12 (i) Carroll County;

13 (ii) Kent County; and

14 (iii) Talbot County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.

15 (7) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subtitle, the Department
16 may allow a person with a deer management permit to shoot deer on any Sunday
17 throughout the year in accordance with the terms of the permit.

18 (8) The Department may allow a person using a State certified raptor to
19 hunt game birds or mammals on each Sunday during the open season for the game birds
20 or mammals.

21 (9) The Department may allow an unarmed person participating in an
22 organized fox chase to chase foxes on Sunday.

23 (10) The Department may allow a person shooting pen-reared game birds
24 or tower-released flighted mallard ducks to hunt on Sunday at a regulated shooting ground
25 in accordance with § 10-906 of this title.

26 (11) The Department may allow a person who is 16 years old or younger to
27 hunt on Sunday if participating in a junior hunt established by the Department in
28 accordance with this subtitle.

29 (12) Except as provided in paragraphs (8) through (10) of this subsection and
30 subject to paragraph (7) of this subsection, a person may not hunt on Sunday in:

- 1 (i) Baltimore City;
- 2 (ii) Baltimore County;
- 3 (iii) Howard County; or
- 4 (iv) Prince George's County.

5 (13) A person may not hunt migratory game birds on Sunday.

6 (14) A person may not hunt on public land within the State park system on
7 Sunday.

8 (15) (i) The Department may not allow a person to hunt on public land
9 designated for hunting by the Department on Sunday except in:

- 10 1. Allegany County;
- 11 2. Cecil County;
- 12 3. Garrett County;
- 13 4. St. Mary's County;
- 14 5. Washington County;
- 15 6. **WICOMICO COUNTY;**
- 16 7. Dorchester County, for turkey during the spring turkey
17 hunting season;

18 [7.] **8.** Frederick County, for deer from the first Sunday in
19 October through the second Sunday in January of the following year, inclusive;

20 [8.] **9.** Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, Somerset
21 County, on public land leased to a hunt club from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30
22 a.m.; **AND**

23 [9.] **10.** Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph,
24 Worcester County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.]; and

25 10. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Wicomico
26 County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.]

27 (ii) The time restrictions under subparagraph [(i)8 and 9] **(I)9 AND**
28 **10** of this paragraph do not apply:

- 1 1. On each Sunday of the deer firearms season; and
- 2 2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two
- 3 Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.

4 [(iii) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)10 of this paragraph
5 do not apply:

- 6 1. On the first Sunday of the deer firearms season; and
- 7 2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two
- 8 Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.]

9 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
10 1, 2026.

26-0302 L Korman HB780.pdf

Uploaded by: Laura Hurley

Position: FAV



WICOMICO COUNTY, MARYLAND

P.O. BOX 870
SALISBURY, MARYLAND 21803-0870
410-548-4696
FAX: 410-548-7872

WICOMICO COUNTY COUNCIL
John T. Cannon, President/At-Large
Jeff Merritt, Vice-President/District #2
James Winn, At-Large
Shanie Shields, District #1
David Ennis, District #3

Josh Hastings, District #4
Joe Holloway, District #5
Laura Hurley, Council Administrator

March 2, 2026

Environment and Transportation Committee
Attn: The Honorable Delegate Marc Korman, Chair
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Wicomico County – Sunday Hunting Time Restrictions – Repeal; House Bill No. 780

Dear Delegate Korman and Committee Members,

The Wicomico County Council writes in strong support of House Bill No. 780 to repeal the restrictions on Sunday hunting in Wicomico County on private property.

The Council has consistently supported similar efforts in prior sessions to expand hunting opportunities for local sportsmen and women. Removing these restrictions will provide greater flexibility for hunters who may not have availability during the traditional workweek, while also promoting responsible wildlife management. Expanded hunting access will additionally benefit the local economy through increased participation in hunting-related activities, tourism, and outdoor recreation.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

WICOMICO COUNTY, MARYLAND



John T. Cannon, Council President

Enclosure

cc: Wicomico County Council
Wicomico County Executive
Bunky Luffman, Director of Administration

HOUSE BILL 780

M2
HB 654/25 – ENT

6lr1892
CF 6lr3293

By: **Wicomico County Delegation**

Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2026

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Wicomico County – Sunday Hunting Time Restrictions – Repeal**

3 FOR the purpose of repealing certain time restrictions that apply to the hunting of game
4 birds and mammals on certain Sundays on private property and public land
5 designated for Sunday hunting in Wicomico County; and generally relating to
6 Sunday hunting in Wicomico County.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
8 Article – Natural Resources
9 Section 10–410(a)
10 Annotated Code of Maryland
11 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
13 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

14 **Article – Natural Resources**

15 10–410.

16 (a) (1) (i) The Department may allow a person to hunt on each Sunday of
17 the game bird and game mammal seasons in:

18 1. Allegany County;

19 2. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Calvert
20 County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;

21 3. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Caroline
22 County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



- 1 4. Cecil County;
- 2 5. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Charles
3 County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;
- 4 6. Subject to subparagraph (iv) of this paragraph, Dorchester
5 County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;
- 6 7. Garrett County;
- 7 8. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Queen
8 Anne's County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;
- 9 9. St. Mary's County;
- 10 10. Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, Somerset
11 County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.;
- 12 11. Washington County;
- 13 12. Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, Worcester
14 County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.; and
- 15 13. [Subject to subparagraph (v) of this paragraph,] Wicomico
16 County[, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m].

17 (ii) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)10 and 12 of this
18 paragraph do not apply:

- 19 1. On each Sunday of the deer firearms season; and
- 20 2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two
21 Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.

22 (iii) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)2, 3, 5, and 8 of this
23 paragraph do not apply:

- 24 1. On each Sunday during the deer firearms season;
- 25 2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two
26 Sundays in November during the deer bow hunting season; and
- 27 3. On each Sunday of the spring turkey hunting season.

28 (iv) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)6 of this paragraph
29 do not apply:

1 1. On each Sunday of the deer hunting seasons from the first
2 Sunday in October through the second Sunday in January, inclusive; and

3 2. On each Sunday of the spring turkey hunting season.

4 [(v) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)(13) of this
5 paragraph do not apply:

6 1. On the first Sunday of the deer firearms season; and

7 2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two
8 Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.]

9 (2) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer on each Sunday of the
10 deer hunting seasons from the first Sunday in October through the second Sunday in
11 January, inclusive, in:

12 (i) Carroll County; and

13 (ii) Frederick County.

14 (3) (i) Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, the Department
15 may allow a person to hunt deer on each Sunday of the deer hunting seasons from 30
16 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m. in:

17 1. Kent County;

18 2. Montgomery County; and

19 3. Talbot County.

20 (ii) The time restrictions under this paragraph do not apply:

21 1. To a participant in a junior deer hunt authorized under
22 this subtitle;

23 2. On one Sunday designated by the Department during the
24 deer firearms season;

25 3. In Kent County, on each Sunday during the deer bow
26 hunting season and the deer muzzle loader season;

27 4. In Montgomery County, on one Sunday designated by the
28 Department during the deer bow hunting season; and

29 5. In Talbot County, on the last three Sundays in October
30 and the first two Sundays in November during the bow hunting season.

1 (4) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer during the deer
2 firearms season:

3 (i) On each Sunday in Harford County; and

4 (ii) On the first Sunday in Anne Arundel County.

5 (5) The Department may allow a person to hunt deer during the deer bow
6 hunting season on:

7 (i) The last three Sundays in October and the first two Sundays in
8 November in Harford County; and

9 (ii) The first Sunday in November in Anne Arundel County.

10 (6) The Department may allow a person to hunt turkey on each Sunday of
11 the spring turkey hunting season in:

12 (i) Carroll County;

13 (ii) Kent County; and

14 (iii) Talbot County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.

15 (7) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subtitle, the Department
16 may allow a person with a deer management permit to shoot deer on any Sunday
17 throughout the year in accordance with the terms of the permit.

18 (8) The Department may allow a person using a State certified raptor to
19 hunt game birds or mammals on each Sunday during the open season for the game birds
20 or mammals.

21 (9) The Department may allow an unarmed person participating in an
22 organized fox chase to chase foxes on Sunday.

23 (10) The Department may allow a person shooting pen-reared game birds
24 or tower-released flighted mallard ducks to hunt on Sunday at a regulated shooting ground
25 in accordance with § 10-906 of this title.

26 (11) The Department may allow a person who is 16 years old or younger to
27 hunt on Sunday if participating in a junior hunt established by the Department in
28 accordance with this subtitle.

29 (12) Except as provided in paragraphs (8) through (10) of this subsection and
30 subject to paragraph (7) of this subsection, a person may not hunt on Sunday in:

- 1 (i) Baltimore City;
- 2 (ii) Baltimore County;
- 3 (iii) Howard County; or
- 4 (iv) Prince George's County.

5 (13) A person may not hunt migratory game birds on Sunday.

6 (14) A person may not hunt on public land within the State park system on
7 Sunday.

8 (15) (i) The Department may not allow a person to hunt on public land
9 designated for hunting by the Department on Sunday except in:

- 10 1. Allegany County;
- 11 2. Cecil County;
- 12 3. Garrett County;
- 13 4. St. Mary's County;
- 14 5. Washington County;
- 15 6. **WICOMICO COUNTY;**
- 16 7. Dorchester County, for turkey during the spring turkey
17 hunting season;

18 [7.] 8. Frederick County, for deer from the first Sunday in
19 October through the second Sunday in January of the following year, inclusive;

20 [8.] 9. Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, Somerset
21 County, on public land leased to a hunt club from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30
22 a.m.; **AND**

23 [9.] 10. Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph,
24 Worcester County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.]; and

25 10. Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, Wicomico
26 County, from 30 minutes before sunrise until 10:30 a.m.]

27 (ii) The time restrictions under subparagraph [(i)8 and 9] **(I)9 AND**
28 **10** of this paragraph do not apply:

- 1 1. On each Sunday of the deer firearms season; and
- 2 2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two
- 3 Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.

4 [(iii) The time restrictions under subparagraph (i)10 of this paragraph
5 do not apply:

- 6 1. On the first Sunday of the deer firearms season; and
- 7 2. On the last three Sundays in October and the first two
- 8 Sundays in November of the deer bow hunting season.]

9 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
10 1, 2026.

2026 HB0780 FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Mathew Goldstein

Position: FAV



<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfU0l1WSdNHoXUz2uYdt4zf-ztmwuTz-rdKJ59WbJstj1Ylw/viewform>

March 04 2026

HB 780 - FAV

Wicomico County - Sunday Hunting Time Restrictions - Repeal

Dear Chair [Marc Korman](#), Vice-Chair [Michele Guyton](#) and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

Maryland bans, or otherwise limits, the sale of automobiles and other vehicles (Business Regulation Code Ann. §18–101), and the sale of alcohol (Alcoholic Beverages Code Ann. §11–102), on Sundays. Financial institutions must be closed on Sunday (Financial Institutions Code Ann. §5–704). Maryland is one of eleven states where hunting is still banned or otherwise restricted on Sunday (Natural Resources Code Ann. §10-410). We at Secular Maryland disagree with the state level Sunday activity restriction defaults. Counties (and Baltimore) have requested, and usually obtained, a variety of exemptions from some of these Sunday activity restrictions from the General Assembly. We welcome this bill which continues that positive trend of allowing more Sunday activities and encourage lawmakers to vote yay.

Sunday is a special day of the week for many Christians. For other citizens the day of rest and worship may be Friday or Saturday, and for some citizens there is no god to worship or no fixed day of rest each week. Maryland law can be, and should be, more accommodating to this diversity of belief among its citizens. Legally banning business and leisure activity on Sundays favors a majority religious practice. Favoring a majority religious practice is not a proper goal of the laws. To the fullest extent feasible, our laws should confer equal accommodations to minority religious practices along with non-religious and anti-religion beliefs.

The decisions regarding which day to hunt, to buy or sell alcohol, to buy or sell vehicles, to initiate and process financial transactions, etc., are best left to the citizens. State

lawmakers can require one day off every week without specifying a particular day of the week by delegating that decision to the affected businesses. Hunting restrictions to accommodate horseback riding, hiking, and the like during the hunting season can be defined for particular hours throughout the week or rotated to different days for each week of the month instead of being on every Sunday. Public facilities can post their schedule on site and on the internet.

Respectfully,
Mathew Goldstein
3838 Early Glow Ln
Bowie, MD 20716

JWC written testimony on Bill 780.pdf

Uploaded by: Jacquie Cowan

Position: UNF



Riding To a Different Beat

1218 Sunrise Beach Rd * Crownsville, Md 21032 * 410-215-4979
jacquiecowan@comcast.net

March 2, 2026

To the Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee

Ref: HB 780 OPPOSED (Repeal of 10:30 Rule)

I am submitting this written testimony against HB 780 on behalf of our standard 300 family members, and as an Association member of the Maryland Horse Council (MHC). I am not opposed to hunting; but rather opposed to hunting on Sundays. I am in favor of shared use and enjoyment by all Marylanders and visitors.

Clubs and equine organizations offer trail rides for their members and guests all over the State of Maryland (including Wicomico), utilizing DNR public lands, parks and private land tracts. In the past before the onslaught of Sunday hunting, rides were hosted on Sundays to stay out of the hunters' way and keep our riders safe on their horses.

The 10:30 am Stopping Rule was a shared compromise the Maryland Horse Council reached with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). It was adopted in good faith in many Counties since its first application in Montgomery County. It is even included in DNR's Transfer of Power HB1063 heard in this Committee this past Friday.

This bill's purpose is to repeal the 10:30 Rule in existence in Wicomico County, taking away the opportunity of others to enjoy that County's great outdoors.

On the overall question about Sunday Hunting, the hunters tell you they need Sundays because they work all week and their children have sports on Saturdays. Well, the same is true for most others wanting to have that one day. The deer population is now in a management and preservation mode, so the original reason for Sunday hunting's need to decrease the herds no longer exists. You may not be aware that many horse owners do not have a trailer (or the time) to load up and go somewhere away from home that would be safer to ride. Everyone should have a reasonable expectation to enjoy their lives safely and without worrying of injury.

You have been told in other hearings that there are not enough accidents between hunters and non-hunters on record to warrant concern. But this is not true, in part, because accidents and injuries are reported to local jurisdictions and not forwarded on to DNR. My own case in point ---- during a Club ride on the C&O Canal where hunting is not allowed, we heard hunting in a field up ahead across the road from the Canal. We alerted the hunters of our approach. They stopped firing until we were adjacent to them when they purposely shot toward and over our heads. We immediately called the local police who did not respond, and a record was never made.

I believe there is a much simpler solution to the continued debate over Sundays for hunting, and the patchwork hunting calendar it has caused that would be fairer to the greater Maryland population --- Return to the original NO MORE SUNDAYS at all.

I implore you please – give this HB780 an unfavorable report. And the same for any future bills that would add more Sundays to any species or season.

Respectfully,
Jacquie Cowan

Jacquie Cowan
Association Representative to the Maryland Horse Council
Anne Arundel Coordinator for TROT (Trail Riders of Today)
Event Organizer for Tuckahoe Equestrian Center
Retired Mounted Search and Rescue
Former Volunteer Mounted Patrol (VMP) for DNR

hunting accident report 2007-2025 copy.pages.pdf

Uploaded by: Jane Seigler

Position: UNF

Excerpts from 19 years of DNR's Annual Hunting Accident Reports

<https://dnr.maryland.gov/nrp/pages/hunting-incident-reports.aspx>

2025

— — A 16-year-old Howard County deer hunter was shot in the arm during a deer drive with a group of hunters. The victim was walking in the woods with a large group of hunters. The hunters were separated and attempted to shoot at a deer while it was running. The deer ran in-between two groups while multiple hunters were shooting at it.

— — A 75-year-old Harford County deer hunter attempted to shoot a deer but missed and the bullet traveled through the window of a house and onto the kitchen floor. The deer was estimated to be 80 yards away.

2024

— — A 14-year-old Caroline County dove hunter shot a dove from his original location in a sunflower field. The hunter went to retrieve the dove but it flushed up from its location. The hunter fired one shot at the flying dove and the pellets traveled approximately 50 yards beyond the intended target and struck another hunter in the back.

— — A 64-year-old Dorchester County dove hunter was hunting on a guided trip with approximately 12 other hunters. The guides placed them in a circle around the sunflower field. An unidentified hunter across the field from the victim, shot at a low flying dove. The pellets from the shot struck the victim in his face, neck, arms and legs.

— — A 65-year-old Anne Arundel County hunter fired his 10 gauge shotgun at a flying goose and hit a house. The hunter mistakenly loaded his shotgun with a slug when he fired at the goose. The slug traveled through the exterior house wall and into furniture.

— — A 59-year-old Talbot County waterfowl hunter hit a vehicle passing by on an adjacent road while shooting at a flying goose. The hunter's location was approximately 160 yards away from the road but the trajectory of the pellets from the shot reached the passing car.

— — A 24-year-old Frederick County deer hunter attempted to shoot a deer but missed and the bullet traveled through the roof of a house and onto the living room floor. The deer was estimated to be 80 yards away but the angle and direction of the shot put the house in the backdrop. The hunter believed the muzzleloader he was using may not have been sighted in.

2023

— — A 59-year-old Talbot County Deer hunter was shot by another hunter from approximately 105 yards away. The victim was standing in the woods wearing an orange jacket when he heard a gunshot and felt pain in his side. The subject who fired the shot was aiming at a deer and missed causing the bullet to travel beyond his intended target striking the victim. The hunters were both hunting from the ground and could not see each other at the time the shot was fired.

— — A 25-year-old Somerset County Deer hunter was shot in the leg by another hunter while walking out of the woods. The victim was walking to his truck at approximately 1745 hours when another hunter thought he was a deer and shot the subject with his bow.

2022

— — A 48-year-old Worcester County Squirrel Hunter was hunting with his 15- year-old son. They were walking approximately 100 yards apart when the subjects' son shot at a squirrel on the ground. The Rimfire .22 long rifle caliber bullet ricocheted off the ground and struck the victim in his left shoulder. The trees and brush between the father and son made each of them unaware of the others location.

— A 46-year-old Howard County Turkey Hunter was shot in the face and chest by a 75-year-old Howard County Turkey Hunter. The 75-year-old subject saw the other hunter approximately 40 yards away and thought it was a turkey.

2021

— A 58-year old Washington County Deer Hunter (Firearms Season) was actively hunting in a wooded area when they were struck in the thigh with a round from another firearm. NRP investigation revealed that the victim was shot in the thigh by a 10-year old relative in their hunting party who had mistaken the victim for game. Victim was transported to the hospital for non-life threatening injuries..

2020

--- A Frederick County resident observed damage to the exterior of their residence, which was consistent with that of pellet strikes from a shotgun. While investigating officers located no hunting activity in the area, the incident did occur during the end of spring turkey season. No further suspect / hunter information was developed throughout the investigation.

— A Kent County resident observed damage to their vehicle's windshield, which was consistent with that of pellet strikes from a shotgun. Nearby waterfowl hunters were interviewed and denied any involvement, which was confirmed through an on-scene investigation. The area in question is known for waterfowl hunting and there were reports of numerous shots leading up to the incident. No further suspect / hunter information was developed throughout the investigation.

— A Kent County waterfowl hunter, returning from a hunt, observed damage to their parked vehicle's tailgate, which consisted of a rifle round lodged into the plastic molding of said tailgate. Nearby waterfowl hunters were interviewed and denied any involvement, which was confirmed through an on-scene investigation. The area in question is known for waterfowl hunting. No further suspect / hunter information was developed throughout the investigation.

— A 17 year-old Wicomico County Waterfowl Hunter was underway in a vessel with other hunters when they were struck with shotgun pellets. Investigation revealed that other members of the victim's hunting party were on shore and approximately 50-60 yards away when a 20 year-old fired a shot towards the victim's vessel in an alleged attempt to scare him and his hunting party. The victim sustained non-life threatening injuries. Natural resources / criminal charges were filed against the shooter in this incident.

— A 14 year-old Somerset County Turkey Hunter (Firearms - Junior Hunt Days) was on foot and stalking turkeys with other juvenile hunters and under adult supervision. As the juveniles were walking 50-70 yards apart, under thick tree cover and out of sight from one another, a 14-year old shooter observed a turkey and fired their shotgun twice at said game. As a result, shotgun pellets ultimately struck the victim. The shooter was not aware that the victim was in the background. The victim sustained non-life threatening injuries.

2019

---- A 61-year-old Washington County Woodchuck Hunter was shooting from the front of their residence off a picnic table for support when one shot went errant and struck a person fishing at an adjacent pond, grazing their shoulder. The victim was approximately two tenths of a mile away obscured by heavy brush and tree cover. Rimfire .22 long rifle ammunition from a rifle was the implement used.

--- An unknown Washington County Deer Hunter (Archery season) shot a crossbow bolt through a Honda SUV while it was parked in the victims driveway. Apparently the shot took place after sunset the evening before the damage was observed. Deer frequent the lawn of this residence and other residences within the neighborhood most evenings. No suspect(s) were observed at the time of the damage.

---- A Montgomery County residence received a broken window caused by a stray bullet fired from a rifle. The projectile was recovered on scene lodged in between two plates of glass. No suspects at the time of the shooting but several shots were reported just before the window received damage.

2018

No relevant reports

2017

--- A 26 year old Talbot County deer hunter (firearms season) shot at two deer with 12 gauge shotgun slugs. The first deer was struck and ran 40 yards before collapsing, the second deer was shot at but the first slug went over its back, the second shot dropped the deer in the location where it was standing. Apparently the slug that missed struck an occupied residence just to one side of the front door. Upon a 911 call a sheriff's department deputy had searched and located the lone hunter. After an investigation by NRP the hunter was charged with negligent hunting and discharging a firearm within the safety zone. Property damage only

--- An unknown Carroll County deer hunter (firearms season) sent a 7mm projectile through the side of a residence, through the bedroom wall, through a wooden dresser, then through a closet wall before coming to rest in a pile of towels in the closet. Two people were in the bedroom at the time but neither was injured. A search of nearby farms was unsuccessful in locating any hunter(s). Property damage only

--- A 52 year old Cecil County deer hunter (late firearms season) took two shots at a deer with a 30/30 rifle toward the direction of a neighboring farm. One of the shots (both of which missed the deer) struck a dining room window of the adjacent residence and stopped, being found on the windowsill. During the investigation it was determined that the round that struck the window had ricocheted off of the ground. The distance from the shooter to the house was 398 yards.

(DNR's on-line annual report for 2017 is identical to DNR'S 2016's report – the 2016 appears to be missing)

2015

--- A 16 year old Allegany County turkey hunter fired two (2) shots from a 12 gauge shotgun at what they believed to be the white head of a spring gobbler. The shot traveled approximately 53 yards and struck a 70 year old camouflaged turkey hunter in the face. This hunter had walked into the woods, sat down and was

listening for turkey's completely camouflaged except for the side of his face which is what the shooter was observing and mistook for a turkey. Non-Fatal

2014

--- A 50 year old Carroll County Fox Hunter sent a 6mm rifle round through a patio glass door. The round went through a vinyl garden hose and a plastic lawn chair before going through the door and striking a kitchen chair. The homeowner was the only occupant in the residence at the time and they were in bed sleeping.

--- A 52 year old Kent County Turkey Hunter (Spring Season) took two shots at a gobbler out in an open field. The second shot was at the bird while in flight. One pellet struck the storm door of an adjacent house causing the glass to shatter. The homeowner was present in the home at the time.

2013

--- A 47 year old Calvert County rabbit hunter received a gunshot (shotgun) wound to his body/thigh/head when he was shot by a 15 year old hunting partner. A party of 4 was hunting with the aid of a dog when a rabbit ran between the men who were approximately 40 yards apart. The shooter stated that he could not see the other hunter when he shot at the rabbit

--- A 52 year old Charles County deer hunter shot his 22 year old son with a rifle across an open field. The shooter and the victim had been hunting together and at dusk the shooter fired out at movement in the field which he mistook for a deer. was walking through the field prior to ending the hunt and returning to the vehicles.

--- A 28 year old Charles County deer hunter while hunting within the safety zone ---discharged his shotgun resulting in the rifled slug passing through a window of the residence striking a chandelier in the dining room and becoming embedded in a wall. Thankfully the residence was vacant at the time of the incident.

--- A rifle round was recovered from a Frederick County home during the second day of the extended fire arms deer season. The round went through the wall of the home and struck a sliding glass door causing it to shatter. The round was recovered at the scene by the sheriff's department. The nearest wooded area was over 400 yards away. Property Damage Only

--- A rifle round was recovered from a "second" Frederick County home during the extended firearms deer season. The round entered through the front wall of the residence blew out the drywall in the living room at which time the bullet came to rest on the floor and was recovered by the homeowner. The bullet was a full metal jacket round (illegal to use on big game)

2012

--- A 62 year old Harford County landowner was struck by a random shot on their property. Upon investigation it was determined the landowner had been hearing a volley of shots repeatedly behind her home. As she and her husband went outside to investigate, a piece of shot struck her in the left forearm. Law enforcement responded and never found hunters in the area. The landowners advised no one had permission to be there, therefore trespassers were suspected to be the shooters. No suspects were located nor arrests made. The victim suffered a very minor wound to her forearm. Non Fatal.

--- A home in Dorchester County was struck by a projectile: Upon investigation it was determined the homeowner heard shots and found a French door in the back of their home was shattered due a projectile striking

the lower left hand pane. The area behind the home is a public hunting area. No suspects were ever located. It was also never determined hunters caused this situation.

2011

--- A 41 year old Carroll County woman was struck in the right leg by a stray projectile while she was in her back yard. Upon investigation it was determined two individuals were plinking and shooting at squirrels & birds with a .22 cal. rifle in a wooded area behind her residence. Due to an unsafe backstop, it was determined their projectile traveled approximately .26 miles to the victim's property causing the leg injury. Squirrel season was closed at the time of this incident. Charges pending. Non fatal.

--- A 57 year old Dorchester County deer hunter shot his 57 year old hunting companion who he had mistaken for a deer: Upon investigation it was determined the shooter and victim had split up to hunt deer. Both hunters were wearing fluorescent orange when they departed each others company. The shooter had gone approximately 95 yards to his stand, climbed into it and began to hunt deer. The shooter observed a dark movement coming towards his location. The shooter was using a .30-06 scoped rifle. The shooter advised he determined he was shooting at a deer by looking through his scope, and shot at center mass.

--- A 48 year old Caroline County deer hunter shot his 46 year old hunting companion that he had mistaken for a deer: Upon investigation it was determined the shooter heard a disturbance of brush and saw movement, thinking it was a deer. The shooter fired a crossbow bolt at the movement at a distance of 62 yards, striking the victim in his left tibia. The time of the incident was four minutes after legal shooting hours. The shooter was charged with Negligent Hunting. Non Fatal.

--- A 16 year old Dorchester County deer hunter shot his 19 year old hunting companion while shooting at a running deer: Upon investigation 8 hunters had organized a deer drive in a marshy dense wooded area. 5 hunters were pushing deer while 3 were standers. As a deer passed between two standers, the shooter shot at a running deer, striking his hunting companion in both femurs with a .12 ga. shotgun using #4 buckshot at a distance of 60 yards. The shooter advised he never saw the victim. Both hunters were wearing daylight fluorescent orange. Non Fatal.

--- A 56 year old Dorchester County turkey hunter shot his 36 year old hunting companion, mistaking him for game: Upon investigation it was determined the two hunters entered their hunting area and posted three turkey decoys in an open field. They then split up to hunt the area and the shooter advised he did not see which direction the victim went. After a period of time the shooter saw three turkeys to the right of the decoys 40 yards away. The shooter advised he could not see the birds at all times. After an hour he called his companion on a cell phone to ask him if he saw the birds. Immediately after their conversation, the shooter saw a movement then shot. He had shot his hunting companion. The movement he saw was the victim putting his cell phone away. The victim was shot at a distance of 38 yards. The victim received 24 #4 shotgun pellets which were fired from the shooters 12 .ga shotgun. The victim was struck in the right side of his body receiving wounds in his head, neck, shoulder, torso, calf, knee, and ankle. The shooter was charged with Negligent Hunting. Non Fatal.

--- A 13 year old Dorchester County deer hunter, while shooting at a deer, struck a home in the background: Upon investigation the shooter discharged a .45 cal. muzzleloader at a deer 6 minutes after legal shooting hours. The projectile, missing the deer, traveled 242 yards striking a house 48 inches from the ground. As the projectile entered the house, it penetrated exterior and interior walls and lodged in a recliner. A resident in the home was sitting in the chair at the time and received a redmark on their shoulder where the projectile stopped on impact. Non Fatal

2010

--- During the 2010 Firearm Deer Season, residents of a home located in the area of Walkersville (Frederick County), reported their house had been struck by a projectile: Upon investigation it was determined the home had been struck by a projectile doing damage to the exterior & interior walls. Interviews were conducted with seven hunters who were in the vicinity of the area the day before hunting deer as regarding their actions that day. It was never determined who may have been the shooter, but one scenario did reveal a hunter had fired a .30.30 rifle at a deer pointed in the direction that the home approximately 3,940 feet away. No evidence was found to support charges. Non Fatal.

--- A 45 year old Frederick County deer hunter, while shooting at a deer, struck a home in the background: Upon investigation the shooter had discharged a .12 gauge shotgun using slugs at a herd of deer. The gun jammed, the shooter cleared the gun, turned and shot at another deer in the direction of the home. The shooter advised he had become disoriented as to the direction he was shooting. The slug entered the home at a distance of 114 yards, traveled through the exterior and two interior walls, through two rooms, and into appliances and home furnishings. No one was in the home at the time of the incident. The shooter was charged with Negligent Hunting and Hunting within 150 yards of a dwelling (Safety Zone). Non Fatal.

--- A 53 year old Howard County deer hunter was shot by his 36 year old hunting companion. The shooter shot at a standing deer with a .12 gauge slug in an open field at approximately 243 yards. The bullet missed the deer, striking the victim sitting in a wooden ground blind at the opposite end of the field. The victim received injuries to his right arm and hand. Non Fatal. Charges pending an investigation

--- A 46 year old Queen Anne's County deer hunting was shot by his 25 year old hunting companion. With both subjects participating in a deer drive, the shooter shot at a running deer twice with a .20 gauge shotgun slug. A slug traveled 70 yards, striking the victim positioned at the opposite end of the field in the left leg. Non Fatal. Negligent Hunting charges pending.

--- A 55 year old Dorchester County rabbit hunter was shot by his 55 year old hunting companion. The shooter shot at a running rabbit with a .20 gauge shotgun in a thicket. The shot pellets traveled approximately 30 to 40 feet through the thicket striking the victim. The victim received injuries to the right side of his head, neck, eye, arm and left

--- A Frederick County garage window was struck by a bullet from an unknown source. An investigation could not recover the projectile nor related evidence. This incident occurred during the firearm's deer season.

2009

--- A 57 year-old goose hunter in Kent County was shot by another hunter while attempting to retrieve a wounded goose. The victim received a minor wound to the face from a shotgun pellet which deflected off the water striking the victim.

--- A window was broken at an occupied daycare facility from a slug fired by a shotgun in Howard County. Several hunters were found in the area and interviewed by several police agencies. Negligent hunting charges were filed, but the States Attorney elected not to prosecute due to insufficient evidence.

--- A window in a house was struck and broken by a sabot round fired by a deer hunter in Talbot County. The investigation found that in this case , the hunter was not negligent and charges were not filed.

--- While checking vacant buildings, several Frederick County Sheriff Deputy vehicles were struck by shot gun pellets causing minor damage. Several individuals who were hunting quail in the area were located and charges were filed by the States Attorney's office for Reckless Endangerment.

--- A 69 year-old deer hunter in Dorchester County found himself in the middle of a deer drive on a wildlife refuge. After hearing several shots the hunter realized that his shotgun had been struck on the barrel and magazine by lead shot. The shooter was never found or located.

2008

--- A 47 year-old Allegany County deer hunter, walking into the woods without hunter orange, was shot by a 32 year-old hunter. The shooter heard noise, saw movement through the trees and shot the victim without identifying the target. Fatal.

--- A 40 year-old Talbot County goose hunter was shot by his hunting partner when the shooter, from outside the blind, shot at a wounded goose. The victim in the blind was in the line of fire. One pellet entered his eye and lodged in his brain. Non-fatal.

--- A 64 year-old Garrett County deer hunter was shot in the abdomen by another hunter who mistook the victim for a deer. Shooter was charged with negligent hunting. Non-fatal.

2007

--- A 51 year-old Caroline County quail hunter shot his hunting partner when a quail flew between them. The victim received 4 pellets to his upper body.

---A 54 year-old Talbot County deer hunter was shot by his hunting partner when a deer ran between them and the shooter shot at the deer. The shooter hit the deer and shrapnel from the slug hit the victim in the hand causing minor injuries.

--- A 59 year-old Queen Anne's County deer hunter was shot by his hunting partner when a deer ran between them. The victim was below field level, climbing a hill out of site of the shooter. He received neck injuries.

--- A 38 year-old Garrett County deer hunter was shot in the shoulder by his 16 year-old hunting partner when the victim was moving through bushes and mistaken for game. Victim was not wearing fluorescent orange.

--- A 64 year-old Charles County Turkey hunter was shot by his hunting partner when the victim started to retrieve a turkey and was mistaken for another turkey by the shooter. Victim received 4 pellet wounds to various parts of the body.

INCIDENTS -- NOT REPORTED IN DNR ACCIDENT REPORTS (2016 to present)– that were recorded in other news sources:

--- **MD: Woman attempting to shoot groundhog accidentally hits man fishing at park**

May 28, 2019

The Maryland Natural Resource Police are investigating an incident of a bullet that grazed a man in the shoulder on Sunday afternoon.

According to police, a 61-year-old woman was shooting a groundhog in her backyard, which borders the Smithsburg Lions Community Park.

The woman missed and the bullet ricocheted across the water and struck a 28-year-old man who was fishing.

Officials said there doesn't seem to be any issues with limitation, however the shooter is responsible for anything in background, like in this case, the park....

--- **Fatality** : Maryland Natural Resources police were investigating a fatal hunting accident in Frederick County on Saturday, the opening day of deer season for firearms.

Police said the rifle of a first-time hunter from Altadena, Calif., was accidentally discharged while he was deer hunting on private property on Eylers Valley Flint Road near Thurmont. Police identified the victim as Vincent Cavallo, 32.

Cavallo and his uncle were hunting in separate areas of the property when the uncle heard a gunshot. He went to check on his nephew and found him dead, DNR police spokeswoman Candy Thomson said. Police were called to the scene at 9:24 a.m.

Police said the victim is believed to have slipped or dropped the gun and it discharged, hitting him in the head. His body was taken to the medical examiner's office. Natural Resources police were assisted by the Frederick County Sheriff's Department in the investigation.

lorraine.mirabella@baltsun.com

--- Author: Scott Broom

Published: 6:07 PM EDT October 24, 2016

The mystery is still not solved after an 87-year old man was apparently struck (ed. note: in the head) by a shotgun pellet or bullet fragment while walking on his property in rural Montgomery County Saturday. Authorities suspect a hunting accident, but they don't know who fired the shot or from where. Residents and hunters say they are deeply concerned by the incident. The victim's property is on the boundary of the Patuxent River State Park where hunting with firearms is permitted. Hunters may not fire guns within 150 yards of an occupied dwelling without a residents' permission, even if the hunter is on another property or public land nearby. Maryland averages 2-3 hunting accidents involving firearms annually. The victim is almost always a hunter. Doctors removed a metallic object from his skull.

NOTE: see more of this episode at:

https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/man-87-in-marylands-montgomery-county-struck-by-a-small-metallic-projectile/2016/10/22/bc0e5974-98c8-11e6-bc79-af1cd3d2984b_story.html

<https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.wusa9.com/amp/article/news/local/mystery-surrounds-shooting-of-elderly-md-man-walking-home/65-340868641>

--- **Fatality**: Oct 11, 2015 - WASHINGTON — A 75-year-old huntsman was fatally *shot during* a hunting trip Saturday *in* Queen Anne's County, ... *Marvin Bowen Coppage*, a resident of *Henderson*, was hired to lead a guided *pheasant and chukar* hunt.

--- 2014 A mountain biker was peppered by bird shot while riding his bike in the Tuckahoe State Park on Maryland's Eastern Shore (related by Tuckahoe park staff) knowledge)

Citizen report:

Date: March 15, 2019 at 9:15:38 AM EDT

To: <mwc.dnr@maryland.gov>, <animalcontrol@howardcountymd.gov>, <hcpdcrimetips@howardcountymd.gov>

Subject: Hunting Violation in Western Howard County

Hello,

I want to report a hunting violation that I encountered yesterday afternoon between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. in the Woodbine parcel of the Patuxent State Park.

I was in the park on horseback and one or two people began shooting firearms near the trail head that is immediately north of the farm at 4505 Jennings Chapel Road.

I hollered several times so that they could hear that I was there and stop shooting long enough for me to get out of the park. They were shooting between me and the closest way out of the park so my way was totally blocked.

They did not stop shooting even as I hollered and eventually my very sane and experienced horse bolted to try to get away from the noise, which was echoing everywhere.

Luckily I am a strong rider and I did not have a mishap but my horse was badly frightened, as was I, frankly. It was mainly luck that we did not run into a tree or barbed wire or worse.

Once I finally got to the trail head – after picking my way along as close to the edge of the park as I possibly could on the theory they would not fire towards residences – I saw their vehicles and got their license plates. They were both Maryland vehicles, one was 5CC8856 and the other was 5C74853.

I have attached photographs of the vehicles. I also have a photograph of my riding attire yesterday, which included a safety orange saddle pad and a reflective yellow jacket, which I can provide if necessary.

I have been riding in this part of the park for over 15 years and every time I have encountered hunters we have been courteous to one another and respectful of each other's sport and mindful of each other's safety. These people were obviously an exception.

I am happy to discuss further by telephone if necessary.

Anecdote from an MHC member:

“Riding the C&O Canal with the Chesapeake Club on a Sunday, we heard shots up ahead coming from a field across River Rd from the towpath -- we yelled ahead to let them know we were coming, the shots stopped until we were adjacent from them when shots were fired over our heads followed by laughter!!! We called 911 to report, were told someone would come check it out, but we never saw or heard anything.”

Veterinarians report treating horses shot with firearms and bows.

Property owners report finding arrows embedded in the ground in their fields, including fields where horses are turned out.

MD Econ Impact Graphics.pdf

Uploaded by: Jane Seigler

Position: UNF

The Economic Impact of THE MARYLAND HORSE INDUSTRY

Horse Industry Wages
\$1.1 billion



Total Economic Impact
\$2.9 billion

Jobs Supported
28,134



Total Impact on GDP
\$1.77 billion

Direct Impact on GDP
\$1.05 billion



~95,000 horses
~800 licensed stables
~38,000 volunteers
717,611 horse enthusiasts
(30.4% of all MD households)



Thoroughbred Racing

\$591 million total impact
5,937 jobs
3 tracks
1 Triple Crown race

Recreational Riding

\$421 million total impact
4,560 jobs
10% of MD households trail ride
6% of MD households take lessons



Sport Horse Competition

\$370 million total impact
4,154 jobs
4 international competitions
>11 sanctioned venues

Harness Racing

\$278 million total impact
3,616 jobs
2 tracks and 1 casino
24 stallions standing





Equine-Assisted Services

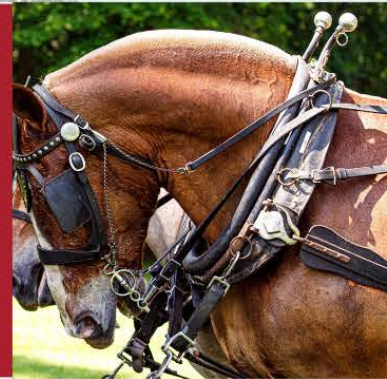
\$36 million total impact
263 jobs

*67 licensed EAS operations
~335 horses in EAS use*

Traditional Working Horses

\$19 million total impact
229 jobs

*Amish & Mennonite communities
Draft horse pull and harness shows*



Rescues & Sanctuaries

\$3.16 million total impact
52 jobs

*58 licensed rescues
~\$1.8 total wages*



19.4% of all MD households participate in horse activities

9.8% of all MD households spectate at horse events

45% of US horse owners earn <\$100k/year*

Median age of MD horse owners: 38

Median age of MD spectators: 26

**MD 2022 median income = \$108,200*



Sunday Hunting Gonzales Survey - June 2018.pdf

Uploaded by: Jane Seigler

Position: UNF

June 2018
updated
February 2019

Gonzales Maryland Survey



Gonzales Poll

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Maryland General Election Poll Sample Demographics19

Background and Methodology

Patrick E. Gonzales graduated magna cum laude from the University of Baltimore with a degree in political science.

His career began in the mid 1980s as an analyst with Mason-Dixon Opinion Research. Mr. Gonzales helped develop, craft and implement election surveys and exit polls for Baltimore's WMAR-TV Channel 2.

Patrick Gonzales has polled and analyzed well over a thousand elections in Maryland and across the country since that time. His polling in the 2014 Maryland gubernatorial election foreshadowed Larry Hogan's victory on Election Day.

During an interview at WBAL 1090 AM radio in Baltimore, Maryland on October 27, 2016, Mr. Gonzales was one of the very few pollsters in the nation to state publicly that Donald Trump would win the 2016 presidential election.

This poll was conducted by ***Gonzales Research & Media Services*** from June 4th through June 10th, 2018. A total of 800 registered voters in Maryland, who indicated that they are likely to vote in the November 2018 general election, were queried by live telephone interviews, utilizing both landline and cell phone numbers. A cross-section of interviews was conducted throughout the state, reflecting general election voting patterns.

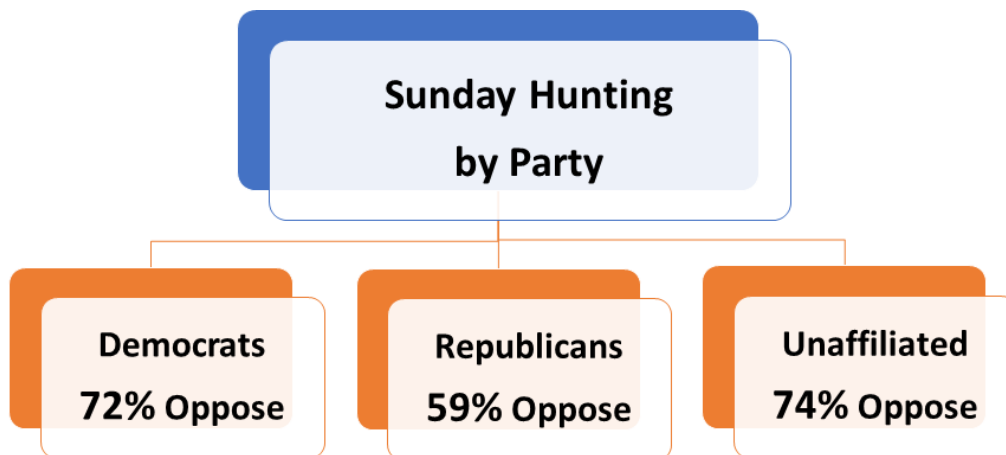
The margin of error (MOE), per accepted statistical standards, is a range of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. If the entire population was surveyed, there is a 95% probability that the true numbers would fall within this range.

Results Overview

Among Maryland voters, 79% favor requiring hunters to pass a basic skill test to prove they can safely shoot a bullet or arrow before being given a hunting license in Maryland (59% “strongly favor” and 20% “somewhat favor”), while 13% oppose a basic skill test (5% “strongly oppose” and 8% “somewhat oppose”), and 8% offer no opinion. Strong support for a basic skill test spans all demographic groups.

All hunters in Maryland can currently hunt six days a week, from September through January. Some want to change the law to add Sunday hunting, while others say six days a week is enough. When we asked voters statewide, 22% favor legislation that would add Sunday hunting (14% “strongly favor” and 8% “somewhat favor”), while 69% oppose adding Sunday hunting (54% “strongly oppose” and 15% “somewhat oppose”), with 9% not responding.

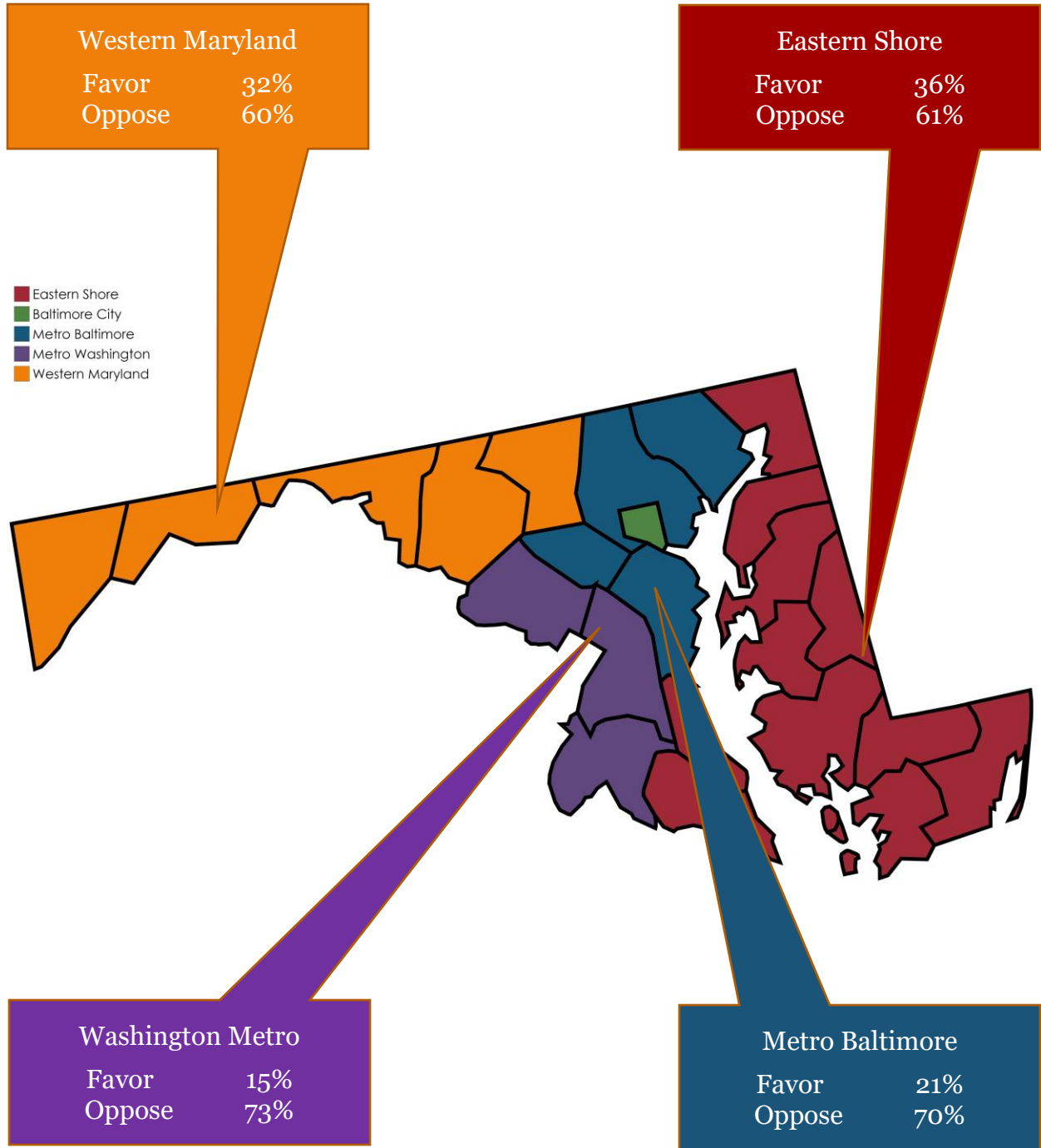
Men and women, young and old, Democrats, Republicans, and independents, all oppose vigorously adding Sunday hunting.



Eleven percent of Marylanders are aware that in counties where Sunday hunting was added, the Department of Natural Resources’ own data failed to prove the addition of Sunday Hunting significantly increased the total amount of deer killed, 72% are not aware of the DNR data, and 17% gave no response.

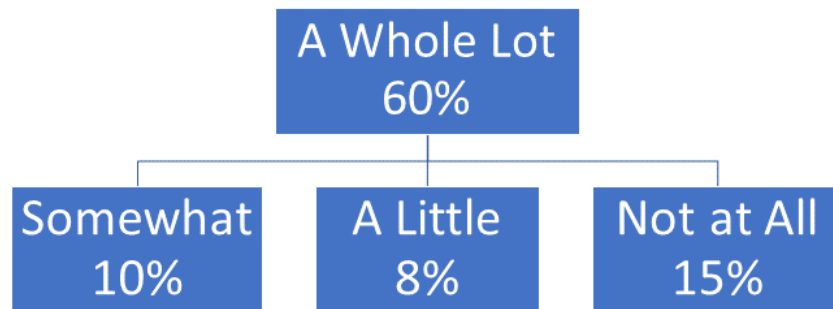
Maps

Sunday Hunting



Adding a seventh day of hunting would cause Marylanders across the state to alter their Sunday recreational plans considerably: 60% say Sunday hunting would make them change their plans to participate in recreational activities on that day “a whole lot,” 10% say it would change their plans “somewhat,” 8% “a little,” and 15% “not at all.”

Sunday Hunting – Impact on Recreational Plans



Currently, most counties in Maryland have a one hundred and fifty yards safety zone, which prohibits hunting within one hundred and fifty yards of an occupied structure, such as your home.

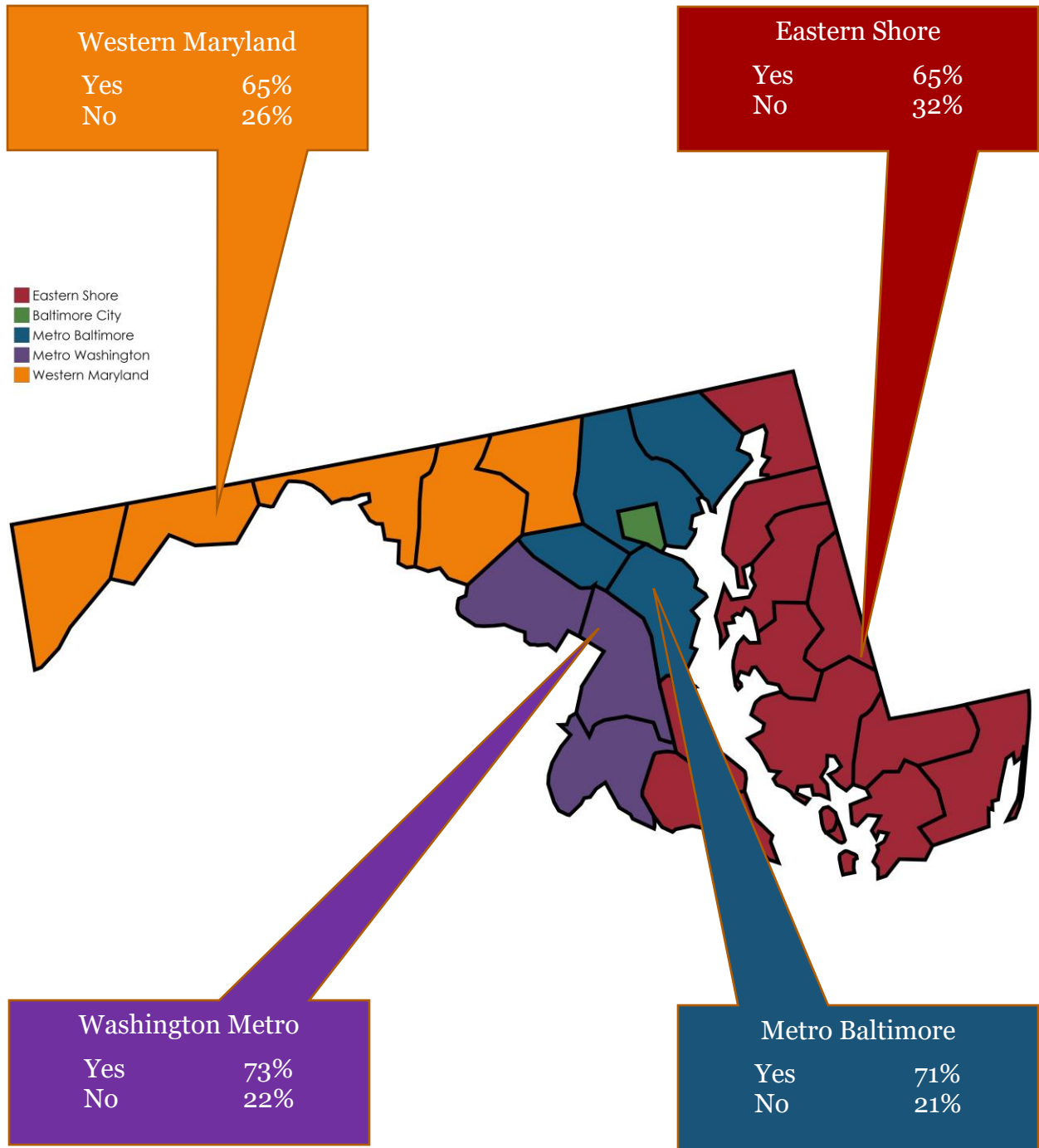
Twelve percent of voters favor legislation that would reduce the safety zone distance to 50 yards of an occupied structure (6% “strongly favor” and 6% “somewhat favor”), while 84% oppose legislation that would reduce the safety zone distance (74% “strongly oppose” and 10% “somewhat oppose”), with only 3% not sure.

Eighty-four percent of men and 85% of women oppose legislation that would reduce the safety zone distance to fifty yards of an occupied structure.

Eighty-five percent of Democrats, 83% of Republicans, and 85% of voters unaffiliated with either party oppose legislation that would reduce the safety zone distance to fifty yards of an occupied structure.

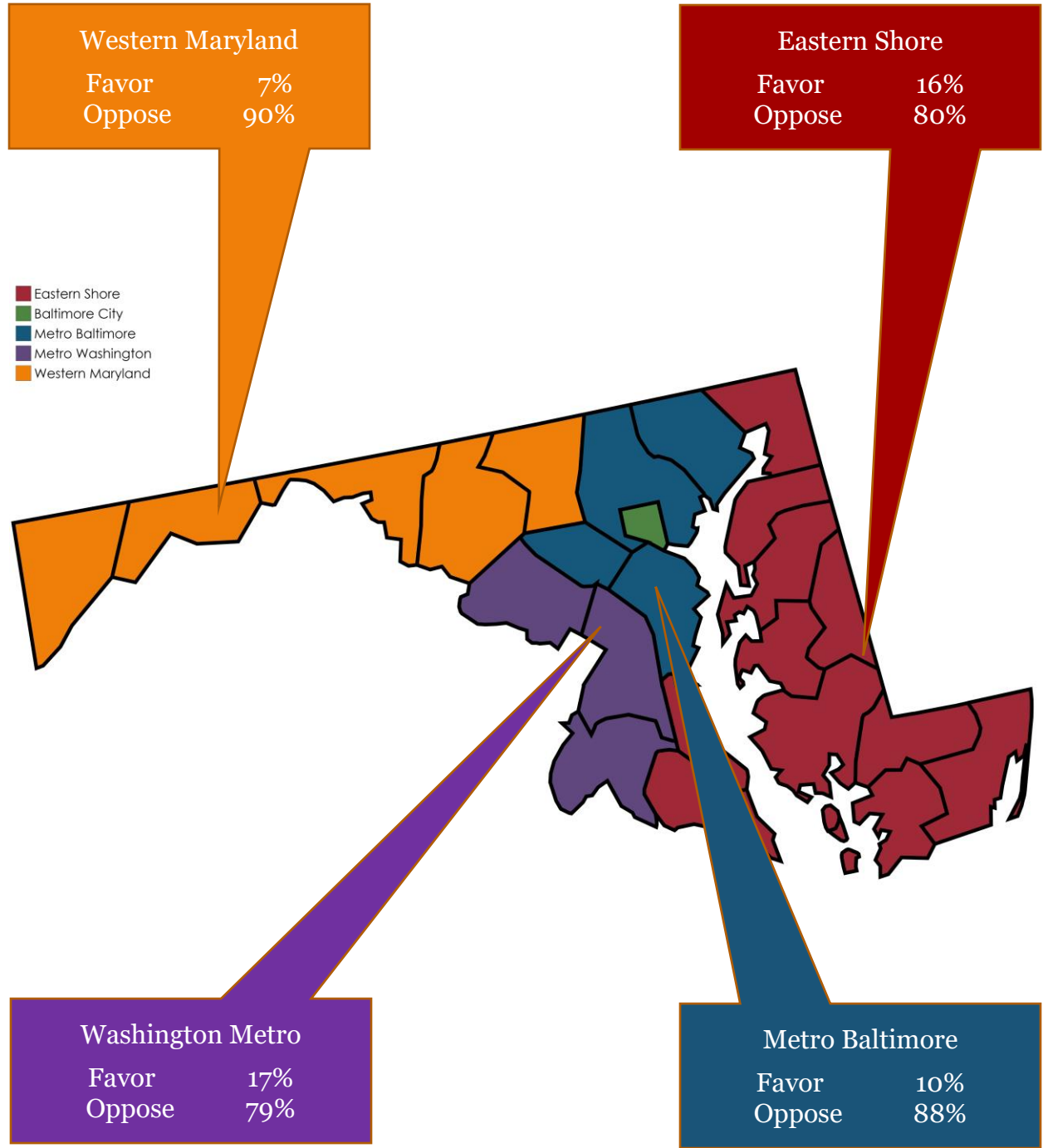
Maps

Sunday Hunting – Alter Recreational Plans

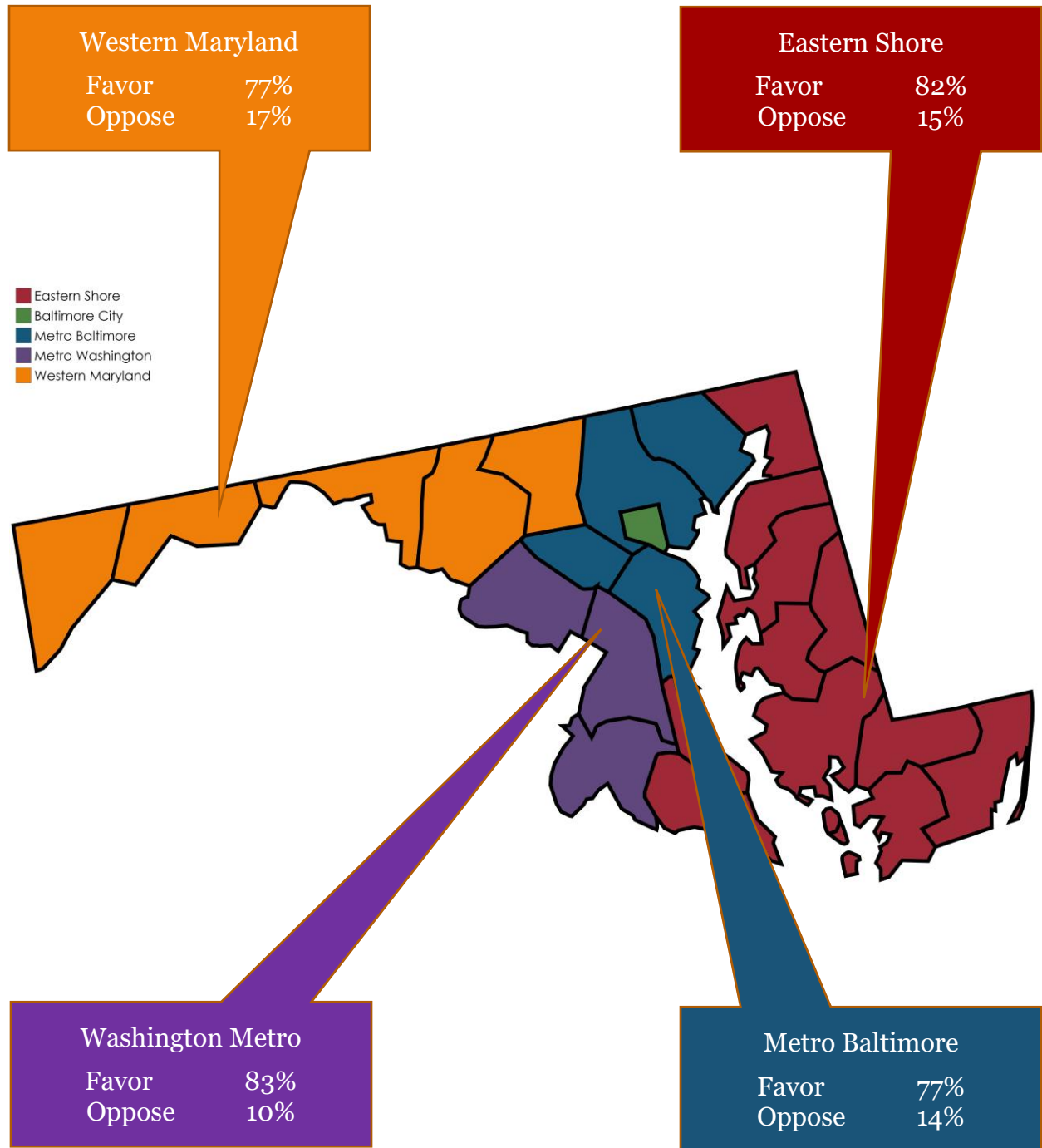


Maps

Legislation to Reduce Safety Zone Distance



Requiring Basic Skill Test



Appendix A: Data Tables

QUESTION #1 Test To Get Hunting License *Do you favor or oppose requiring hunters to pass a basic skill test to prove they can safely shoot a bullet or arrow before being given a hunting license in Maryland?*

<u>BASIC SKILL TEST</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Favor	635	79.4 %
Oppose	104	13.0 %
No answer	61	7.6 %
Total	800	100.0 %

Is that strongly or somewhat favor/oppose requiring hunters to pass a basic skill test to prove they can safely shoot a bullet or arrow before being given a hunting license in Maryland?

<u>BASIC SKILL TEST</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Strongly Favor	471	58.9 %
Somewhat Favor	164	20.5 %
Somewhat Oppose	61	7.6 %
Strongly Oppose	43	5.4 %
No answer	61	7.6 %
Total	800	100.0 %

N=800

<u>BASIC SKILL TEST</u>					
	<u>Strongly Favor</u>	<u>Somewhat Favor</u>	<u>Somewhat Oppose</u>	<u>Strongly Oppose</u>	<u>No answer</u>

PARTY

Democrat	264 58.8%	95 21.2%	24 5.3%	19 4.2%	47 10.5%
Republican	137 60.6%	48 21.2%	14 6.2%	18 8.0%	9 4.0%
Unaffiliated	70 56.0%	21 16.8%	23 18.4%	6 4.8%	5 4.0%

N=800

<u>BASIC SKILL TEST</u>					
	<u>Strongly Favor</u>	<u>Somewhat Favor</u>	<u>Somewhat Oppose</u>	<u>Strongly Oppose</u>	<u>No answer</u>

GENDER

Male	213 57.0%	81 21.7%	30 8.0%	27 7.2%	23 6.1%
Female	258 60.6%	83 19.5%	31 7.3%	16 3.8%	38 8.9%

N=800

BASIC SKILL TEST

	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No answer
--	----------------	----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------

RACE

White	316 59.3%	112 21.0%	41 7.7%	31 5.8%	33 6.2%
African-American	128 58.7%	42 19.3%	17 7.8%	10 4.6%	21 9.6%
Other	27 55.1%	10 20.4%	3 6.1%	2 4.1%	7 14.3%

N=800

BASIC SKILL TEST

	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No answer
--	----------------	----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------

AGE GROUP

Millennial	102 62.6%	31 19.0%	14 8.6%	8 4.9%	8 4.9%
Xennial	65 53.3%	27 22.1%	11 9.0%	5 4.1%	14 11.5%
Gen X	88 56.1%	38 24.2%	9 5.7%	12 7.6%	10 6.4%
Gen Jones	104 59.8%	34 19.5%	12 6.9%	9 5.2%	15 8.6%
Boomer	112 60.9%	34 18.5%	15 8.2%	9 4.9%	14 7.6%

N=800

BASIC SKILL TEST

	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No answer
--	----------------	----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------

REGION

Baltimore Metro	197 57.1%	68 19.7%	30 8.7%	19 5.5%	31 9.0%
Washington Metro	169 62.6%	54 20.0%	11 4.1%	15 5.6%	21 7.8%
Rural Maryland	105 56.8%	42 22.7%	20 10.8%	9 4.9%	9 4.9%

QUESTION #2 Sunday Hunting – Favor/Oppose *All hunters in Maryland can currently hunt 6 days a week, from September through January. Some want to change the law to add Sunday hunting STATEWIDE, while others say 6 days a week is enough and they just want one day without weapons in their neighborhoods and parks. Do you favor or oppose legislation that would add Sunday hunting, giving hunters 7 days a week?*

SUNDAY HUNTING	Number	Percent
Favor	175	21.9 %
Oppose	551	68.9 %
No answer	74	9.3 %
Total	800	100.0 %

Is that strongly or somewhat favor/oppose?

SUNDAY HUNTING	Number	Percent
Strongly Favor	108	13.5 %
Somewhat Favor	67	8.4 %
Somewhat Oppose	123	15.4 %
Strongly Oppose	428	53.5 %
No answer	74	9.3 %
Total	800	100.0 %

N=800

SUNDAY HUNTING				
Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No answer

PARTY

Democrat	41 9.1%	38 8.5%	68 15.1%	257 57.2%	45 10.0%
Republican	58 25.7%	19 8.4%	27 11.9%	107 47.3%	15 6.6%
Unaffiliated	9 7.2%	10 8.0%	28 22.4%	64 51.2%	14 11.2%

N=800

SUNDAY HUNTING				
Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No answer

GENDER

Male	78 20.9%	30 8.0%	53 14.2%	184 49.2%	29 7.8%
Female	30 7.0%	37 8.7%	70 16.4%	244 57.3%	45 10.6%

N=800

	SUNDAY HUNTING				
	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No answer
<u>RACE</u>					
White	86 16.1%	47 8.8%	77 14.4%	277 52.0%	46 8.6%
African-American	17 7.8%	17 7.8%	37 17.0%	122 56.0%	25 11.5%
Other	5 10.2%	3 6.1%	9 18.4%	29 59.2%	3 6.1%

N=800

	SUNDAY HUNTING				
	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No answer
<u>AGE GROUP</u>					
Millennial	20 12.3%	7 4.3%	29 17.8%	93 57.1%	14 8.6%
Xennial	11 9.0%	11 9.0%	22 18.0%	68 55.7%	10 8.2%
Gen X	23 14.6%	10 6.4%	24 15.3%	80 51.0%	20 12.7%
Gen Jones	37 21.3%	19 10.9%	25 14.4%	77 44.3%	16 9.2%
Boomer	17 9.2%	20 10.9%	23 12.5%	110 59.8%	14 7.6%

N=800

	SUNDAY HUNTING				
	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No answer
<u>REGION</u>					
Baltimore Metro	39 11.3%	32 9.3%	57 16.5%	186 53.9%	31 9.0%
Washington Metro	25 9.3%	16 5.9%	41 15.2%	155 57.4%	33 12.2%
Rural Maryland	44 23.8%	19 10.3%	25 13.5%	87 47.0%	10 5.4%

QUESTION #3 Sunday Hunting - Awareness *Are you aware, or not aware, that in counties where Sunday Hunting was added, the Department of Natural Resources' own data failed to prove the addition of Sunday Hunting significantly increased the total amount of deer killed?*

<u>DNR DATA</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Aware	87	10.9 %
Not Aware	580	72.5 %
No answer	133	16.6 %
Total	800	100.0 %

N=800	<u>DNR DATA</u>		
	<u>Aware</u>	<u>Not Aware</u>	<u>No answer</u>

PARTY

Democrat	41 9.1%	334 74.4%	74 16.5%
Republican	37 16.4%	153 67.7%	36 15.9%
Unaffiliated	9 7.2%	93 74.4%	23 18.4%

N=800	<u>DNR DATA</u>		
	<u>Aware</u>	<u>Not Aware</u>	<u>No answer</u>

GENDER

Male	48 12.8%	262 70.1%	64 17.1%
Female	39 9.2%	318 74.6%	69 16.2%

N=800

	DNR DATA		
	Aware	Not Aware	No answer
<u>RACE</u>			
White	58 10.9%	382 71.7%	93 17.4%
African-American	25 11.5%	162 74.3%	31 14.2%
Other	4 8.2%	36 73.5%	9 18.4%

N=800

	DNR DATA		
	Aware	Not Aware	No answer
<u>AGE GROUP</u>			
Millennial	17 10.4%	116 71.2%	30 18.4%
Xennial	12 9.8%	92 75.4%	18 14.8%
Gen X	18 11.5%	115 73.2%	24 15.3%
Gen Jones	24 13.8%	128 73.6%	22 12.6%
Boomer	16 8.7%	129 70.1%	39 21.2%

N=800

	DNR DATA		
	Aware	Not Aware	No answer
<u>REGION</u>			
Baltimore Metro	32 9.3%	258 74.8%	55 15.9%
Washington Metro	25 9.3%	204 75.6%	41 15.2%
Rural Maryland	30 16.2%	118 63.8%	37 20.0%

QUESTION #4 Sunday Hunting – Alter Plans *If you were aware that a hunter with a crossbow or firearm could be in an area where you want to participate in recreational activities on a Sunday, would this cause you to alter your plans: a whole lot, somewhat, a little, or not at all?*

<u>ALTER RECREATIONAL PLANS</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
A Whole Lot	482	60.3 %
Somewhat	78	9.8 %
A Little	63	7.9 %
Not At All	122	15.3 %
No answer	55	6.9 %
Total	800	100.0 %

N=800

ALTER RECREATIONAL PLANS

	<u>A Whole Lot</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>A Little</u>	<u>Not At All</u>	<u>No answer</u>
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PARTY

Democrat	286 63.7%	38 8.5%	29 6.5%	65 14.5%	31 6.9%
Republican	124 54.9%	26 11.5%	23 10.2%	38 16.8%	15 6.6%
Unaffiliated	72 57.6%	14 11.2%	11 8.8%	19 15.2%	9 7.2%

N=800

ALTER RECREATIONAL PLANS

	<u>A Whole Lot</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>A Little</u>	<u>Not At All</u>	<u>No answer</u>
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GENDER

Male	211 56.4%	40 10.7%	37 9.9%	62 16.6%	24 6.4%
Female	271 63.6%	38 8.9%	26 6.1%	60 14.1%	31 7.3%

N=800

ALTER RECREATIONAL PLANS

	A Whole Lot	Somewhat	A Little	Not At All	No answer
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RACE

White	315 59.1%	51 9.6%	53 9.9%	79 14.8%	35 6.6%
African-American	135 61.9%	21 9.6%	9 4.1%	35 16.1%	18 8.3%
Other	32 65.3%	6 12.2%	1 2.0%	8 16.3%	2 4.1%

N=800

ALTER RECREATIONAL PLANS

	A Whole Lot	Somewhat	A Little	Not At All	No answer
--	-------------	----------	----------	------------	-----------

AGE GROUP

Millennial	99 60.7%	14 8.6%	14 8.6%	25 15.3%	11 6.7%
Xennial	72 59.0%	11 9.0%	8 6.6%	26 21.3%	5 4.1%
Gen X	103 65.6%	12 7.6%	12 7.6%	17 10.8%	13 8.3%
Gen Jones	96 55.2%	19 10.9%	17 9.8%	27 15.5%	15 8.6%
Boomer	112 60.9%	22 12.0%	12 6.5%	27 14.7%	11 6.0%

N=800

ALTER RECREATIONAL PLANS

	A Whole Lot	Somewhat	A Little	Not At All	No answer
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REGION

Baltimore Metro	211 61.2%	32 9.3%	30 8.7%	43 12.5%	29 8.4%
Washington Metro	176 65.2%	21 7.8%	13 4.8%	46 17.0%	14 5.2%
Rural Maryland	95 51.4%	25 13.5%	20 10.8%	33 17.8%	12 6.5%

QUESTION #5 Safety Zone Reduction *Currently, most counties in Maryland have a 150 yard safety zone, which prohibits hunting within 150 yards of an occupied structure, such as your home. Now that archery crossbows can shoot an arrow almost 150 yards in just one second, do you favor or oppose legislation that would reduce the safety zone distance to 50 yards of an occupied structure?*

<u>REDUCE SAFETY ZONE</u>	Number	Percent
Favor	100	12.5 %
Oppose	673	84.1 %
No answer	27	3.4 %
Total	800	100.0 %

Is that strongly or somewhat favor/oppose legislation that would reduce the safety zone distance to 50 yards of an occupied structure?

<u>REDUCE SAFETY ZONE</u>	Number	Percent
Strongly Favor	49	6.1 %
Somewhat Favor	51	6.4 %
Somewhat Oppose	77	9.6 %
Strongly Oppose	596	74.5 %
No answer	27	3.4 %
Total	800	100.0 %

N=800

	<u>REDUCE SAFETY ZONE</u>				
	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No answer

PARTY

Democrat	28 6.2%	25 5.6%	43 9.6%	337 75.1%	16 3.6%
Republican	14 6.2%	18 8.0%	22 9.7%	165 73.0%	7 3.1%
Unaffiliated	7 5.6%	8 6.4%	12 9.6%	94 75.2%	4 3.2%

N=800

	<u>REDUCE SAFETY ZONE</u>				
	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No answer

GENDER

Male	20 5.3%	27 7.2%	35 9.4%	279 74.6%	13 3.5%
Female	29 6.8%	24 5.6%	42 9.9%	317 74.4%	14 3.3%

N=800

	REDUCE SAFETY ZONE				
	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No answer
<u>RACE</u>					
White	27 5.1%	33 6.2%	47 8.8%	409 76.7%	17 3.2%
African-American	18 8.3%	17 7.8%	23 10.6%	152 69.7%	8 3.7%
Other	4 8.2%	1 2.0%	7 14.3%	35 71.4%	2 4.1%

N=800

	REDUCE SAFETY ZONE				
	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No answer
<u>AGE GROUP</u>					
Millennial	6 3.7%	6 3.7%	15 9.2%	129 79.1%	7 4.3%
Xennial	7 5.7%	9 7.4%	7 5.7%	98 80.3%	1 0.8%
Gen X	11 7.0%	11 7.0%	13 8.3%	114 72.6%	8 5.1%
Gen Jones	14 8.0%	10 5.7%	18 10.3%	129 74.1%	3 1.7%
Boomer	11 6.0%	15 8.2%	24 13.0%	126 68.5%	8 4.3%

N=800

	REDUCE SAFETY ZONE				
	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No answer
<u>REGION</u>					
Baltimore Metro	12 3.5%	21 6.1%	33 9.6%	269 78.0%	10 2.9%
Washington Metro	28 10.4%	18 6.7%	23 8.5%	191 70.7%	10 3.7%
Rural Maryland	9 4.9%	12 6.5%	21 11.4%	136 73.5%	7 3.8%

 Maryland General Election Poll Sample Demographics

<u>PARTY</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Democrat	449	56.1 %
Republican	226	28.3 %
Unaffiliated	125	15.6 %
Total	800	100.0 %

<u>GENDER</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Male	374	46.8 %
Female	426	53.3 %
Total	800	100.0 %

<u>AGE GROUP</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Millennial (18 to 34 years old)	163	20.4 %
Xennial (35 to 44 years old)	122	15.3 %
Gen X (45 to 54 years old)	157	19.6 %
Gen Jones (55 to 64 years old)	174	21.8 %
Boomer (65 and older)	184	23.0 %
Total	800	100.0 %

<u>RACE</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
White	533	66.6 %
African-American	218	27.3 %
Other	49	6.1 %
Total	800	100.0 %

<u>REGION</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Baltimore Metro	345	43.1 %
Washington Metro	270	33.8 %
Rural Maryland	185	23.1 %
Total	800	100.0 %

<u>RURAL MARYLAND</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Eastern Shore	89	48.1 %
Western Maryland	96	51.9 %
Total	185	100.0 %

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MARYLAND
HORSE
COUNCIL

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One Common Bond: The Horse
One Common Voice: The Horse Council

In the House Environment & Transportation Committee, March 4, 2026

Testimony of the Maryland Horse Council on HB 780

Wicomico County - Sunday Hunting Time Restrictions - Repeal - UNFAVORABLE

The Maryland Horse Council (MHC) is a membership-based trade association that represents the state-wide horse industry in Maryland. Our members include horse farms; horse related businesses; equestrian competitors; trainers; individual enthusiasts; equine-assisted therapy programs; and breed, interest, and discipline associations. We represent over 700,000 Marylanders who make their living with horses, or who just own or love them.

- **A majority of Marylanders oppose Sunday hunting.** An independent statewide poll conducted by **Gonzales Research and Media Services in 2018 found that 68.9% of respondents oppose Sunday hunting, and over 53% strongly oppose it.** A copy of that poll has been filed with this testimony. Even the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) own 2018 commissioned survey found that a majority of the general population does not favor Sunday hunting and does not want to see it expanded.¹
- **This bill would allow all day Sunday hunting on every Sunday of the year in Wicomico County on private and some public land.**
- **This bill would abrogate a hard won compromise between hunters and other users of the outdoors that has been accepted by numerous counties, to put to bed the decades-long debate about Sunday hunting, and would allow all day Sunday hunting on both public and private land in Wicomico County virtually year-round. This bill upends a compromise solution that many hoped would bring this issue, which has consumed much of this Committee's time for many years, to a final closure that gave everyone a little bit of what they wanted.** It seeks to strip recreational users of their only right to quiet and safe enjoyment of the outdoors on one - partial - day of the week.
- **This bill would infringe on the rights of the general public to enjoy outdoor recreation. 78% of the Gonzales survey respondents said they would decide to alter their recreational plans to avoid hunters. In a Maryland Horse Council 2016 survey, 85% of respondents said they changed their schedules or riding locations to avoid encountering hunters.**

¹ https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Documents/2018_DeerPublicOpinionSurvey.pdf

- **Since the pandemic, widespread use of outdoor recreation and natural resources by the general public has increased and remains strong. Many of these new users are unfamiliar with the rules of hunting and hunting seasons, including the distinctions between private and public lands. Now is not the time to increase general public exposure to possible hunting risks, or to further deter the public from outdoor recreation. We have separately submitted with this testimony a report of hunting accidents from FY2007 - FY2025, compiled from DNR's own data, which shows that contemporaneously sharing the outdoors with hunters has real risk of injury and even death**

The horse industry in Maryland is a large, engaged, and thriving constituency, and a strong economic engine: \$2.9 billion in economic impact; 28,000 jobs; \$1.1 billion in total wages; \$1.7 billion in total contribution to GDP. 16,000 properties occupying over 705,000 acres (almost 10% of Maryland's total land area, and over 25% of Maryland's agricultural land) Horse industry participants spend \$1 billion annually (compare that to the \$264 million annual figure for hunters often cited in Fiscal and Policy Notes). There are almost 100,000 horses in Maryland (more per square mile than any state in the Union), and over 700,000 horse enthusiasts. (See MD Econ Impact Report attached.) There are horses in every county in the state. The majority of Maryland riders do at least some trail riding.² Thus, legislative actions that affect the equine industry have a broad economic effect.

POSITION

The Horse Council opposes HB 780.

BACKGROUND

For well over 20 years, the Maryland Horse Council has worked to ensure fair use of shared natural resources during hunting seasons, by seeking to preserve Sundays as the one day of the week when children and adults who are hikers, birdwatchers, dog walkers, trail riders and other outdoor enthusiasts could enjoy the outdoors without concern for adverse interactions with hunters.³

Eventually, the Maryland Horse Council proposed a compromise that would allow fair use of shared natural resources, by cutting off Sunday hunting, where allowed, at 10:30 am. This compromise gave hunters, trail riders, and others, plenty of Sunday access to opportunities. This compromise was embraced by the Legislature for many counties. Now we are facing a bill that would roll back that compromise in Wicomico County, and allow all day Sunday hunting for every species of game bird and game mammal - essentially year round.

The issue of recreational Sunday hunting is certainly a fraught one. In the November 2018 independent Gonzales statewide poll, the vast majority of respondents opposed Sunday hunting:

SUNDAY HUNTING Oppose 68.9%; Favor 21.9%

Breakdown:

Strongly Favor 13.5%

Somewhat Favor 8.4%

Somewhat Oppose 15.4%

Strongly Oppose 53.5%

² <http://equiery.com/trail-riding-tops-reader-survey/>

³ In a 2016 Maryland Horse Council survey, 35% of respondents reported "adverse incidents" with hunters while trail riding, ranging from rudeness to deliberate attempts to spook horses, threatening with firearms, firing of "warning" shots, and near misses with arrows. Significant percentages of DNR's survey respondents also reported problems when encountering hunters.

These majorities opposed to Sunday hunting are true in Baltimore Metro, Washington Metro AND Rural areas. Rural Maryland opposed Sunday hunting 60.5% vs 34.1% in favor. Even DNR's own commissioned survey found that a majority of the general population does not favor Sunday hunting and does not want to see it expanded. (See footnote 1.) This bill directly contravenes that clear public opinion.

It is important to make clear that the Horse Council is not opposed to hunting. Many of our members are hunters of deer, other game mammals, and game birds. We just want to ensure that everyone has a safe option for enjoyment of the outdoors. The COVID pandemic dramatically increased the level of outdoor activity and use of natural resources. Many of these new users are unfamiliar with the rules of hunting and hunting seasons, are unaware that they may encounter hunters in the woods, and may not be aware of the boundaries between public and private lands, which are often not well marked. Expanding Sunday hunting will increase the chances of potential adverse interactions between hunters and members of the public who are relatively new to the outdoors. We have separately submitted with this testimony a report, culled from DNR's own data, of hunting accidents where people and property were injured (excluding falls from tree stands and hunter self-inflicted wounds).

It is often argued that expanded Sunday hunting is necessary for deer management. Simply put, Sunday hunting is not an efficient or effective deer management tool. We agree that deer can present health, public safety, and economic problems in Maryland. However, Sunday hunting is demonstrably not an effective solution to that problem. For example, in counties that vastly expanded Sunday hunting in 2013, the deer harvest has pretty consistently fallen year after year.⁴

Therefore, Sunday hunting is not an effective deer management tool; it is rather a hunter convenience tool. Convenience is surely a benefit, but it is a benefit that should be available to all constituents equitably, not just one small segment. The number of licensed hunters in Maryland, about 100,000 (of which only about 85,000 are residents), is less than 2% of the state's population of about 6 million. Compare that with the 24% who reported making frequent or occasional trips specifically to view and experience deer in their native habitat for photography or other non-hunting purposes. (DNR survey; see footnote 1.) As previously noted, there are 700,000 horse enthusiasts in Maryland.

It is sometimes argued that the declining harvest is in part due to the declining numbers of recreational hunters, but that begs the question of whether relying on recreational hunters is therefore "backing the wrong horse" in any effort to reduce the deer population. Adding Sundays demonstrably does not increase the harvest; it just affords recreational hunters the luxury of choosing which weekend day to devote to hunting, thereby spreading the same number of deer kills over seven days instead of six. In the DNR survey, almost 60% of the hunters did not indicate that they would harvest more deer if Sundays were available.

It is also sometimes argued that recreational hunters need Sundays because they have other things to do on Saturdays - a situation that plainly applies to most of Maryland's families who use outdoor resources, be they hunters, birdwatchers, dog walkers, mountain bikers, off-road vehicle enthusiasts and trail riders. So why should one group get special consideration? Where is the balancing of the public good, the equitable access? In the Horse Council's statewide survey on Sunday hunting, 68% of respondents

⁴ Allegany - An increase of from 6 to 21 Sundays. In 2013-2014, the total harvest was 3636; in 2023-24 - 2952; 2024-25 - 3412
Frederick - Increase of from 6 to 15 Sundays. 2013-2014 - total harvest 8040; in 2023-24 - 6549; 2024-25 - 6869
Washington - Increase of from 6 to 21 Sundays. 2013-2014 - total harvest 6376 in 2023-24 - 4418; 2024-25 - 5066

ride on trails on public or private land one or more days a week. And, perhaps most significantly, 85% said they changed their schedules or riding locations to avoid encountering hunters. It is inarguable that armed hunters present a safety risk not presented by other user groups. It just makes sense that those other user groups should have at least some time when they do not have to take that risk.

Another important factor to consider in the balancing of the public good is the fact that, unlike many other states, Maryland's hunting seasons are very long. Part of the basis for these long seasons is that Maryland lacked Sunday hunting for most of its history. When Sunday hunting was introduced, there was not a corresponding shortening of the hunting seasons, so now there are both long seasons and increasing Sunday hunting opportunities.

This bill would authorize Sunday hunting on private land and some public land. We of course recognize that private land owners have some right to decide what uses they want to allow on their land. But such rights have never been absolute, as any review of zoning and land use rules can plainly establish. And, as a practical matter the public/private land distinction affords little relief since public and private tracts are often relatively small, non-contiguous, intertwined and rarely well-marked. In our survey, referenced above, 56% of respondents said they ride on trails that cross both public and private land. Moreover, hunting projectiles do not respect property lines and have often crossed onto land where hunting was not permitted (see Hunting Accident Report submitted with this testimony).

CONCLUSION

We urge the Committee to give HB 780 an unfavorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

THE MARYLAND HORSE COUNCIL

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Position: INFO



Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor
Josh Kurtz, Secretary
David Goshorn, Deputy Secretary

March 4, 2026

BILL NUMBER: HOUSE BILL 780 - FIRST READER

SHORT TITLE: WICOMICO COUNTY – SUNDAY HUNTING TIME RESTRICTIONS – REPEAL

DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: LETTER OF INFORMATION

EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT’S POSITION

The Department of Natural Resources offers the following information concerning HB 780. Removing the 10:30am restriction on Sunday hunting would increase hunting opportunities. This increased opportunity assists with managing the state’s deer population. Lower deer numbers result in less agricultural crop damage, fewer deer-vehicle collisions, and reduced conflicts with humans in urban and suburban settings. Many hunters find the evening hours more productive than the morning when deer hunting. Likewise, afternoon and evening hours on Sundays can help hunters avoid other conflicts they may have with the morning hours. Lastly, Sunday hunting is an important hunter recruitment tool for the department as it often doubles the weekend hunting time available and assists with keeping hunters active in the field.

HB 780 also reduces possible confusion for hunters and other outdoor recreation users by creating a uniform end time for hunting activities on all days during the annual hunting season. Currently, hunters must stop hunting at 10:30 am only on certain Sundays and in certain counties.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Sunday hunting is currently open on 20 Sundays during the regulated deer season in Wicomico County. Fourteen of those Sundays have an end time of 10:30 am whereas the remaining Sundays have the standard evening end time. All other deer hunting days in Wicomico County (approximately 125 days total) have the standard evening end time. Likewise, all furbearer and small game hunting activities in Wicomico County currently must cease at 10:30 am on Sundays, whereas the standard evening end time applies to the remaining days of the season. All-day Sunday hunting has not created significant complaints to the department over the past two decades.

BILL EXPLANATION

HB 780 repeals the 10:30am required end time for hunting on certain Sundays in Wicomico County.

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