



CHRISTOPHER G. KOPACKI, PH.D.
Director, Government Relations - State Affairs
ckopacki@nssf.org | 202-893-2177 | nssf.org
400 N. Capitol Street NW, Suite 475, Washington, D.C. 20001

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: House Bill 1067 – Hunting – Lead and Lead-Based Ammunition – Phase-Out

Dear Chair Korman, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Chris Kopacki, and I serve as Director of Government Relations for the Mid-Atlantic region for the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), the trade association representing America's firearm, ammunition, hunting, and shooting sports industry. On behalf of NSSF and our members, I respectfully request an unfavorable report on House Bill 1067.

House Bill 1067 would require the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to phase out the use of traditional lead ammunition for hunting all game species by July 1, 2029. While NSSF shares the goal of protecting wildlife and maintaining healthy ecosystems, this legislation imposes a broad statewide mandate that is unnecessary and could have unintended consequences for hunters, conservation funding, and wildlife management in Maryland.

Wildlife management agencies across North America support voluntary conservation approaches to address concerns regarding the unintended ingestion of lead fragments by wildlife. In 2025, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) adopted Voluntary Best Management Practices (BMPs) developed by the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (MAFWA) to help hunters reduce potential exposure to lead residues. These BMPs emphasize education, outreach, and informed decision-making rather than regulatory mandates.

This collaborative framework encourages hunters who wish to reduce potential risks to voluntarily choose non-lead ammunition or adopt practices such as removing carcass remains from the field and recovering game whenever possible. These recommendations were developed through a cooperative process involving wildlife agencies, scientists, industry, and conservation organizations and reflect a science-based approach to wildlife management.

A statewide mandate requiring non-lead ammunition would create practical challenges for hunters. Non-lead ammunition is often more expensive and less available for certain calibers, which can disproportionately impact rural hunters, new participants, and youth hunters.

Hunter participation is also essential to conservation funding. Through the purchase of licenses, equipment, and ammunition, hunters contribute significant funding for wildlife conservation through programs such as the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act, which provides critical resources to state wildlife agencies.

The federal prohibition on lead shot for waterfowl hunting addressed a specific and well-documented wildlife management issue. House Bill 1067, however, proposes a sweeping statewide mandate affecting all game species and hunting methods without similar consensus from wildlife agencies that such a broad ban is necessary.

Rather than imposing a blanket prohibition, policymakers should support education, voluntary adoption of best practices, and targeted conservation efforts that address specific concerns while maintaining hunter participation.

For these reasons, the National Shooting Sports Foundation respectfully urges an unfavorable report on House Bill 1067.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Christopher G. Kopacki, Ph.D.
Director of Government Relations, Mid-Atlantic
National Shooting Sports Foundation