

# COALITION OF CONNECTICUT SPORTSMEN

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## **Proposed H. B. No. 5281 AN ACT CONCERNING THE DONATION OF DEER MEAT TO NONPROFIT ENTITIES**

by **Robert T. Crook, Director**

The bill presents a problem with DEP deer management. We fully support the reduction of the Deer herd in specified zones, however this bill infers state wide application by not designating zones. For example Zones 1-4a (northern tier) are in balance with management objectives. Conversely zones 11 & 12 are seriously overpopulated. Deer sex is another issue, e.g., in zones 11 & 12 doe deer tags are replaced for each taken.

A better and possibly more effective deer reduction program is one proposed in 2007 (HB 5910) – appropriation of a small amount to provide funding to compensate butchers for processing deer meat for hunters who take more deer than needed for their own use. This meat would then be donated to nonprofit entities. \$25,000 would process between 350-500 deer with a resultant meat donation of 17,500 - 25,000 lbs which represents a little over \$1 per pound for soup kitchen, halfway house or group home consumption.

While we agree with reduction of the deer herd and donations to nonprofit entities (Hunters for the Hungry) both of which hunters have pursued and implemented, we believe the better approach to both is a small amount of state funding, resulting in more deer taken and donated..

Thank you.