



TO: Chairman Meyer, Chairman Roy, and Environment Committee Membership

FROM: CT Sportsmen's Caucus

DATE: March 9, 2009

RE: Caucus Positions on Various Bills

Last month at a meeting of the Connecticut Sportsmen's Caucus we discussed numerous pieces of legislation before the Environment Committee. The 43 member body of the Caucus took the following positions:

On the matter of House Bill 6552: AN ACT BANNING THE SALE OR USE OF COMPUTER SOFTWARE OR SERVICES TO REMOTELY OPERATE WEAPONS TO HUNT ANIMALS OR BIRDS, the Caucus was of the opinion that while there was no apparent interest in the State to participate in the activities that would be banned by the legislation, we could not, and should not, let the opportunity to send a clear message go by. We could not envision an instance under which any responsible hunter would make use of this technology. Therefore, we voted to support the legislation that would prohibit its use and would ask that the Environment Committee do the same.

On the matter of House Bill 6553: AN ACT CONCERNING SUNDAY HUNTING, the Caucus voted to support the narrowly crafted language that would permit Sunday Hunting with bow and arrow. We believe that this would be both an opportunity for sportsmen and a tool for the Department of Environmental Protection. There is plenty of data to support this type of hunting in the effort to better control the deer herd in parts of Connecticut that have thus far grown beyond the size the agency and many organizations believe to be healthy for people, plants and all the animals that share these ecosystems.

On the matter of Senate Bill 994: AN ACT CONCERNING LEGHOLD TRAPS, the Caucus had a lengthy discussion about the use of leg hold traps in this state. Subsequently, the bill as drafted appears to include other traps of which all are currently legal in this state for use by trained and licensed trappers for the capture of furbearing animals. Best Management Practices of this state and many others include these tools for the purpose of controlling population, limiting damage to forest and field, and helping to limit the impact on roads and septic systems. While the vote was not unanimous, it was the consensus of the caucus that SB 994 be opposed.

We thank the Committee for considering our opinions on these pieces of legislation and would be happy to discuss them and others as they pertain to opportunities for Connecticut Sportsmen and the benefit of Connecticut's environment.