

SB 83 AN ACT AUTHORIZING BOW AND ARROW HUNTING ON SUNDAY

OPPOSE

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I am a Connecticut Licensed Wildlife Rehabilitator. I have been a rehabilitator for 13 years. I also have my Federal Migratory Bird permit. I primarily raise orphaned wildlife, as well as rehabilitate injured adults. The totals vary year to year, but I typically raise and release over 700 babies a season as well as rehabilitate injured juveniles and adults. Sundays are my busiest day of the week. Typically get 25-50 calls or more on Sundays from members of the public who have found orphaned wild life as they are out walking, hiking, working in their yards or enjoying other outdoor activities. Sunday hunting will endanger public safety not only when members of the public attempt to get the orphans to a wildlife rehabilitator or wait for a rehabilitator to get to them and the babies, but even just walking in the woods or along trails. Arrows don't stop at a given boundary or stop if the intended target is missed. Walking with companion animals or riding horses puts not only public at risk of being hit by a stray bullet or arrow, but also their four-legged companions. Being on a horse as it is going down hard as a result of an injury often results in injuries to the rider as well. Both horse and rider must not only wait for help, but the right kind of help or risk losing the horse. Horses are larger than deer, but they are attractive targets to an inexperienced or unskilled hunter some distance away. This past fall the DEEP prosecuted a hunter for wounded a large buck. The hunter stood by and video taped the buck as he thrashed about on the side of the stream desperately trying to get back on his feet and uploaded it to the web. It wasn't until later that he beat and hacked the buck until it finally succumbed to its wounds. This will become more common as more animals, not just deer, are wounded by hunters who miss their moving target, leaving an injured animal, now in shock and panic, trying to flee for it's life and quite possibly ending up near someone's yard or near people out enjoying their leisure activities. This is a dangerous encounter for anyone not trained to handle wounded wildlife and even for those of us who are. There are a number of studies that show the unacceptably high crippling rates for bow hunting. It is inhumane and just isn't worth the cost to the 99% of the population to allow the 1% of the population to cause such an adverse impact.

Reducing the deer population will not reduce the tick population. It has been shown that ticks have a number of hosts and they live quite well without a deer host in the equation. The absence of deer will not reduce or eliminate the lyme disease occurrences in the human population. Other methods of controlling the ticks have to be devised and in the meantime, the public will have to learn how to live with them safely just as they do with fleas, termites, mites and a host of other pest insects.

Killing deer in greater numbers will not reduce the overall deer population. The deer population is controlled by a power much greater than Man. The deer will produce fewer fawns when there is less food. When the deer population is reduced by hunting, it has been shown that the does have more fawns because it is natural for them to increase the population since there is more food. Managing the deer population is actually an effort to keep the deer population artificially high for the hunters. The public complains about the deer, so in rush the hunters to save the day. This has been going on so long that letting the deer manage their own population control at this point will be messy, very messy, and difficult to stand back and watch, but it will happen over time given the chance. Human management has obviously not worked so we would not be having this hearing today. It is time for another approach instead of using killing and maiming as the answer. This is inhumane.