

**Subject line:**

**Testimony for 3/22 public hearing-- OPPOSE HB 6654 (bear hunting) and OPPOSE HB 5412 (Sunday hunting)**

Dear Senator Meyer, Representative Gentile, and Honorable Members of the Environment Committee,

Please accept this as my testimony (for public hearing held on 3/22/13) in

**OPPOSITION to a provision within HB 6654**, AAC Sportsmen Related Revisions to the General Statutes. I oppose the provision that would open up a bear hunting season. I also write in **OPPOSITION to HB 5412**, AAC Deer Management Programs on Private Property—I am **opposed to Sunday hunting**.

**I vote, and these issues are important to me.**

I oppose bear hunting (HB 6654) because:

- I τρεασυρε ουρ στατε □ σ βλαχκ βεαρσ ανδ δο νοτ ωαντ το σεε τηεμ ηυντεδ ανδ ορπηανεδ βψ τ ροπηψ ηυντερσ. Ινστεαδ, Ι ασκ τηατ ψου μαινταιν προτεχτιονσ φορ Χοννεχτιχυτ □ σ βεαρσ.
- **Βεαρ χονφλιχτσ τυπηχαλλψ οχχυρ ιν ρεσιδεντιαλ αρεασ, ανδ νοτ ωηερε ηυντινγ τακεσ πλαχε.** Trying to manage conflicts in one place by killing bears in another is completely counter-productive - and likely to result in orphaned cubs and much public outcry.
- Τηερε αρε ηιγηλψ **εφφεχτιψε ανδ ηυμανε σολυτιονσ** φορ μαναγινγ βεαρ χονφλιχτσ, συχη ασ ρ εμοπινγ αττραχταντσ (ε.γ., αχχεσσιβλε γαρβαγε, βιρδ φεεδερσ), ορ υσινγ προπεν απερσιπε χον διτιονινγ τεχηνιθυεσ το κεεπ βεαρσ φρομ αρεασ τηεψ □ ρε νοτ ωαντεδ. (Note: Ινιτιαλ απερσιπε χονδιτιονινγ ισ υσυαλλψ δονε βψ τραινεδ προφεσσιοναλσ). Πυβλιχ εδυχατιον ισ τηε κεψ το μα ναγινγ βεαρ-ηυμαν χονφλιχτσ □ κιλλινγ βεαρσ ισ νοτ τηε ανσφερ.
- Τηερε ισ **νο σχιεντιφιχ ρατιοναλε ορ νεχεσσιτη** φορ ινστιτυτινγ α ηυντ. **Τηε εξαχτ βεαρ ποπυλ ατιον ισ υνκνοων**; φυρτηερ, ανψ βεαρ ποπυλατιον ρισκ ασσεσμεντ ωουλδ τακε σεπεραλ ψεαρ σ το χομπλετε.

I oppose Sunday hunting on private land (HB 5412) because:

- Οτηερ στατεσ τηατ ηαπε οπενεδ λιμιτεδ φορμσ οφ Συνδαψ ηυντινγ ιν ονε λεγισλατιπε σεσσιον ηαπε ιμμεδιατελψ προποσεδ α χομπλετε ρεπεαλ οφ τηε Συνδαψ ηυντινγ προηιβιτιον ιν τηε φο λλοωινγ λεγισλατιπε σεσσιον (ε.γ., Νεω θερσεψ, Μαρψλανδ).
- Τηε πυβλιχ δοεσ νοτ ωαντ ηυντινγ ον Συνδαψσ, ανδ λιφτινγ τηε προηιβιτιον ωιλλ **φεοπαρδιζε πυβλιχ σαφετηψ ανδ διμινιση ουτδοορ οππορτυνιτεσ φορ νον-χονσυμπτιπε υσερσ.**
- **Συνδαψ ηυντινγ ωιλλ ενδανγερ πυβλιχ σαφετηψ.** Arrows and bullets know no boundaries and pose public safety hazards to anyone who is in a large radius of the hunter. Further, domestic animals, such as dogs and horses, are sometimes mistaken for game animals. Thus, expanding recreational opportunities for hunters diminishes opportunities for hikers, horseback riders, bird watchers, and many others.
- **Ονλψ 1% οφ Χοννεχτιχυτ ρεσιδεντσ ηυντ.** Wildlife watchers, hikers, mountain bikers, dog walkers, and horseback riders outnumber hunters in Connecticut by 29 to 1, and represent a growing demographic, while hunters are shrinking in numbers (39% decrease over ten years, per latest USFWS survey). Further, wildlife watchers outspend hunters by 7.4 to 1, contributing around \$510 million dollars to our state's economy annually (Source: The United States Fish and Wildlife Service). The overwhelming majority of people do not participate in hunting, and have only one day a week during hunting season when they can use the outdoors safely without the threat of bullets or arrows. Hunters already have four and a half months to hunt deer each year in Connecticut – more than 100 days of recreational deer hunting at six days each week. Farmers can obtain deer depredation permits to kill

deer throughout the year. There is no compelling reason to disrupt this longstanding tradition to appease a tiny minority.

- **Ηυντινγ ωιλλ νοτ ρεδυχε Λψμε δισεασε ρισκ.** The Black-legged tick has well over 100 hosts, including all mammals, many popular songbirds, and even lizards – thus the removal of one host isn't enough to suppress the Lyme-disease causing tick (Ostfeld, 2011, Jordan et al, 2007). In addition, research indicates that hunting may put the public more at risk by creating disease “hot spots” (S. Perkins et al, 2006, Ginsberg and Zhioua, 1999; Ostfeld, 2011)--Ticks questing for a large host are more likely to end up on people and dogs after deer numbers have been reduced. There's a good reason why the CDC and health authorities don't recommend hunting to control Lyme disease – because it doesn't work. Sunday hunting won't help to curb the spread of this devastating disease, despite the claims of certain interest groups.

- **Συνδαψ ηυντινγ ωιλλ νοτ ρεσολωε δεερ–ρελατεδ προβλεμσ.** One of the main problems with trying to manage deer numbers through any kind of hunting -- as repeatedly cited during a Smithsonian Institute conference on Deer Overabundance (McShea et. al 1997) -- is that deer are highly prolific, and their high reproductive rate can quickly compensate for declines in their population. The net result is that their numbers “bounce back” after hunting season.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours truly,

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