

To Whom It May Concern:

I live in Redding CT. Tick borne diseases are the number one health hazard and concern in my community. As the life cycle of the tick is dependent upon deer, deer management is essential, and thus I write in support of HB 5412.

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection's guide, Managing Urban Deer in Connecticut, states, "High incidences of Lyme Disease have been associated with deer overabundance. Larval and nymph stages of the deer tick feed on birds and mammals. The adult tick, however, requires a blood meal from a medium to large size mammal to reproduce and lay thousands of eggs. Deer are the primary host for the adult deer tick and are key to the reproductive success of the tick. Numerous studies have shown that abundance and distribution of ticks are correlated with deer densities."

The authors then cite many of those studies highlighting the fact that reducing deer populations reduces the number of ticks and the incidence of Lyme disease. They conclude, "Deer population management must serve as the main tool in any long-term strategy to reduce human incidences of Lyme disease." Further, the only proven effective way to reduce deer populations is through hunting, and once deer are "removed from an area, other deer will not abandon their home range to fill that void."

Unfortunately, the primary goal of current hunting regulations has not been to promote the health and welfare of our communities: instead the regulations are there to foster and promote the sport. But with so many of our family members, friends, and neighbors sickened by tick-borne diseases, the time has come to pass a common-sense law that indeed will help improve the health of our communities. Lives, pain, and suffering hang in the balance.

Again, I urge the passing the HB 5412. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Jeff Fligelman  
Redding, CT

5412