

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

Since I cannot be present at the public hearing tomorrow, March 22, 2013, please accept this as my testimony 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 and am truly horrified and heartbroken at this possibility.

Also, I'm including my testimony in OPPOSITION to HB 5412, AAC Deer Management Programs on Private Property—I am opposed to Sunday hunting.

**I am a regular, dependable voter, and these issues are important to me as a concerned citizen of Connecticut!**

I oppose bear hunting (HB 6654) for many reasons, first and foremost because I treasure our state's black bears and do not want to see them hunted and orphaned by trophy hunters. Instead, I ask that you maintain protections for Connecticut's bears.

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. Let's prevent the outcry from humans, and suffering of these animals before either start.

We are smart enough now to put into practice *effective and humane solutions* for managing bear conflicts, such as removing attractants (e.g., accessible garbage, bird feeders), or using proven aversive conditioning techniques to keep bears from areas they're not wanted. (Note: Initial aversive conditioning is usually done by trained professionals). Public education is the key to managing bear-human conflicts – killing bears is not the answer. In my researching this topic, there is **no scientific rationale or necessity** for instituting a hunt.

**I oppose Sunday hunting on private land (HB 5412) and urge you not to support this bill!**

I know from my many social circles and interactions with the public that the majority do not want hunting on Sundays. Ending the prohibition will mean someone's child, someone's beloved companion animal or other unintended victim will no doubt happen eventually, and the outcry will be enormous. Leave Sundays for families, wildlife to walk off the beaten path without a bullseye on each back.

While they are an organized minority, only **1% of Connecticut residents hunt**. Wildlife watchers, hikers, mountain bikers, dog walkers, and horseback riders outnumber hunters in Connecticut!

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.

I stand with the science and research that proves that 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, your thoughtful consideration of these issues, and your compassion and wisdom to do the right thing by your constituents and Connecticut's animals,

Yours truly,  
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