

Testimony in OPPOSITION to HB 5412 AAC DEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY.

Submitted by Rosamund Downing
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Dear Senator Meyer, Representative Gentile, and Honorable Members of the Environment Committee:

As an outdoor enthusiast and a DEEP Wildlife Rehabilitator, I cherish my time outdoors – the beauty and serenity of a hike in the woods cannot be surpassed. Unfortunately, during hunting season, my opportunity to safely enjoy nature is greatly diminished. We, the 99% of non-hunters in Connecticut, must contend with bullets and arrows six days a week. Now, the 1 % hunting population, wants to deprive us of our one and only day of tranquility. It is unacceptable and undemocratic to further endanger the public simply to appease a *tiny* minority.

It is scientifically inaccurate to suggest that expanding hunting will reduce the threat of Lyme disease or contain the growing deer population (Ostfeld, 2011 & Jordan, *et al*, 2007). Even the CDC does NOT recommend hunting to control Lyme disease because the removal of one large host will force ticks to move on to other large hosts, *i.e.*, humans and their pets. As far as the deer population is concerned, the math is simple: the more you kill, the more will be born – nature abhors a vacuum and deer numbers routinely rebound after hunting season.

In closing, hunters in Connecticut have four and a half months each year to hunt deer, six days a week. That is more than sufficient! The legislature needs to protect the rights of the majority – the non-hunters. We hikers, dog walkers, and horseback riders outspend hunters 7 to 1, thereby contributing far more to the state's economy (USF&WS).

Thank you.