

Testimony for Sunday Hunting, Environment Committee, February 25, 2013

Dear Sirs;

The question of Sunday hunting has become an annual event for this body. It's time to finally resolve that question and to give our residents the same rights enjoyed by the vast majority of the remaining nation. Connecticut is one of only seven states, which totally forbid Sunday hunting. The logic for this is confusing. Some claim that it is in the interest of safety, some that the hunted species need a break and others that tradition demands it. None of these hold water. Connecticut has an admirable safety record; our Hunting Safety programs have served us well. All hunters must have attended these courses and as a result accidents are few and far between. Sunday hunting would not change this. Within the forty-three states, which do permit Sunday hunting, no adverse impact has been found for the wildlife species involved. Citing tradition is rendered meaningless when you consider that no other similar activity is so restricted. Fishing, golf and a host of other equally intrusive activities are permitted.

The biggest problems encountered by hunters today are the lack of opportunity. This happens in two ways, finding the time to hunt and finding a place to hunt. Time is the issue here. Most "would be" hunters are either employed or attending school. Whichever it is, time becomes an issue. Weekdays are often fully booked and for many Saturday is equally busy. Not being able to hunt on Sunday means that many who would like to hunt are disenfranchised. This becomes especially hurtful when it impacts young hunters, many of whom must hunt with an older more experienced person. These are our future hunters and a failure to get a good start often disillusion them permanently. Hunting is a well-established tradition; it develops an appreciation of our great outdoors, promotes a responsible life style and is an important part of wildlife management.

It should be noted that in Connecticut no one hunts without the landowners' permission. This includes both private property and public property. Permitted Sunday hunting would be controlled in the same way ensuring safety, positive wildlife management practices and allowing now disenfranchised hunters the opportunity to enjoy their sport.

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