

I am in **support** of Bill # SB915, archery hunting on Sunday on private land.

This being my personal testimony, I would like to rebut some information that we have heard here in years gone by. People in opposition to Sunday hunting have claimed that hunting deer does not help manage deer populations but will cause a “compensatory rebound effect” in the population. So I did some research to see if this is true. By definition, compensatory rebound effect is the reproductive response of a species to increase reproductive efforts to produce healthy, competitive offspring. This effect is caused by mating constraints, due to lowered population levels, either by starvation, predation, disease or some other devastation. The species’ survival will resort to, for example, females laying more eggs than usual or males will produce more sperm to increase the amount of eggs inseminated. What’s this have to do with deer? I don’t know either. We all know deer are very similar to sheep and cows. I have never seen a deer, cow or sheep lay an egg. Confusing, right?

Well, what the opposition is not telling you is that this study was done in 2007 by the National Academy of Sciences using cockroaches, fruit flies, pipefish, wild mallards and feral house mice. These species were kept in a restraining environment to increase the stresses of reproduction. It was a very interesting experiment but is a far, far stretch to apply to deer.

The way those opposed to hunting twisted this information was captivating. Their testimony stated that if the deer population is lowered, deer will look around realize deer were missing and start producing multiple offspring. Well, again, some of this is true. If the deer populations are controlled and reduce to maintain the carrying capacity of the land a lot of positive things happen. First, the food source will rebound, allowing sufficient vegetation to feed a deer to a healthy state to fight off disease, predators and survive harsh winters. Second, a mature healthy doe is expected to producing twins. One major sign of a stressed herd (lack of food, predator pressure) is that the does in the herd will only produce one fawn or none. Sometimes, an older doe will produce triplets, but as the DEEP has researched, this reduces the ability of survival for all the offspring due to the small size of each of the fawns. Third, the ecology of the land will naturally return to allow the survival of other species, for example nesting areas for birds, habitat for small ground animals, and seeds to develop to large trees.

This bill will allow Sunday hunting using archery equipment on private land. I really don’t know why there is an opposition to this management technique. The landowner must sign a permission slip for the hunter to carry with him while hunting. The landowner also reserves his right to not allow someone to hunt on Sunday. This bill does not override the landowner. The hunter is not getting more tags to take any more deer than allowed by statute. This bill will only give the hunter more opportunity to be successful.

So, although those opposed to hunting try to mislead you into thinking deer management is bad, their facts prove that managing the deer population will actually help the health of deer and the environment.