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

Please accept this as my testimony (for public hearing held on 2/25/13) in **OPPOSITION to SB 915,** An act authorizing bow and arrow hunting on Sunday.

I vote, and this issue is important to me.

Why I oppose this bill:

- **Hunting will not reduce Lyme disease risk.** The Black-legged tick has well over 100 hosts, including all mammals, many popular songbirds, and even lizards – thus the removal of one host isn't enough to suppress the Lyme-disease causing tick (Ostfeld, 2011, Jordan et al, 2007). In addition, research indicates that hunting may put the public *more at risk* by creating disease "hot spots" (S. Perkins et al, 2006, Ginsberg and Zhioua, 1999; Ostfeld, 2011)--Ticks questing for a large host are more likely to end up on people and dogs after deer numbers have been reduced. There's a good reason why the CDC and health authorities don't recommend hunting to control Lyme disease – because it doesn't work. Sunday hunting won't help to curb the spread of this devastating disease, despite the claims of certain interest groups.

- **Sunday hunting will not resolve deer-related problems**. One of the main problems with 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.

- **Bow-hunting is one of the most inhumane forms of hunting** because it results in unacceptably high crippling rates –a high proportion of deer are wounded even when the most sophisticated forms of archery are used (Citations: Gregory 2005, Nixon et. al 2001, Moen 1989, Cada 1988, Boydston and Gore 1987, Langenau 1986, Gladfelter 1983, Stormer et. al, 1979, Downing**).**

- **Only 1% of Connecticut residents hunt.** Wildlife watchers, hikers, mountain bikers, dog walkers, and horseback ridersoutnumber hunters in Connecticut by 29 to 1, and represent a growing demographic, while hunters are shrinking in numbers (39% decrease over ten years, per latest USFWS survey). Further, wildlife watchers outspend hunters by 7.4 to 1, contributing around $510 million dollars to our state's economy annually (Source: The United States Fish and Wildlife Service). The overwhelming majority of people do not participate in hunting, and have only one day a week during hunting season when they can use the outdoors safely without the threat of bullets or arrows. 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.

- **Sunday hunting will endanger public safety.** Arrows and bullets know no boundaries and pose public safety hazards to anyone who is in a large radius of the hunter. Further, domestic animals, such as dogs and horses, are sometimes mistaken for game animals. Thus, expanding recreational opportunities for hunters diminishes opportunities for hikers, horseback riders, bird watchers, and many others.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Wilhelm
11 Krystal Lane
Windsor, CT 06096