

# COALITION OF CONNECTICUT SPORTSMEN

P.O. Box 2506, Hartford, CT 06146, (203) 245-8076

[www.ctsportsmen.com](http://www.ctsportsmen.com)

[ccsct@comcast.net](mailto:ccsct@comcast.net)

Testimony presented to the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE, by Robert T. Crook, Director. 02/25/13

## **IN SUPPORT of Raised Bill No. 915, AN ACT AUTHORIZING BOW AND ARROW HUNTING ON SUNDAY UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES**

**This Sunday Hunting bill will help accomplish DEP Wildlife Management Objectives and is a revenue raiser.**

**This bill promotes Bowhunting, Private Land only, Written Permission of the Landowner, Deer only.**

### **Indisputable Facts:**

- 1. Deer numbers are increasing, while the numbers of hunters is decreasing.**
- 2. Deer/Car collisions, Lyme disease occurrence, and property damage are all increasing.**
- 3. Hunting is the ONLY proven population management technique available for Deer.**
- 4. DEP Wildlife Management has resulted in population balance on most State lands; overpopulation problems are on privately owned lands.** The bill only allows bow hunting on private land with written permission given to the hunter. The landowner can still refuse hunting on Sunday. The bill does not include State Lands or allow more tags for deer harvest. The bill only provides more opportunity.
- 5. Increases Harvest: About 25% of Deer are taken by bow;** 6-8% by muzzleloader; the remainder by rifle/shotgun 60-70%. "The deer harvest on Saturdays during the firearms season is 76% greater than the average harvest on weekdays." (DEP, Dep. Comm. Leff, 2006). The Saturday deer harvest data applies equally to bowhunting.
- 6. Inclement weather on Saturdays, significantly reduces take and management.**
- 7. SAFETY: In over a century of bowhunting record keeping, there has been NO instance of injury/death of non-hunting participants!**
- 8. We have accepted the separation of hunters and other recreationalists on private land with Blue Trails although there have been NO instances of accidents on the other six days.**
- 9. Public lands (State Forests/Parks) are not included.**
- 10. Sunday Bowhunting is a Revenue Raiser** by allowing those persons who work 6 days per week to participate. Even for those who work Monday through Friday, a Sunday hunting ban cuts their available hunting time in half. The most common reason that hunters stop hunting is lack of hunting opportunity which is largely decided by two factors: accessible land and available time. **Promoting non-resident involvement:** Few hunters will take extended hunting trips to a state that won't let them to hunt on a non-work day. These out-of-state hunters pay higher license fees benefitting DEP and spend more money than in-state hunters on gas, food, lodging and other incidentals that go along with a week-end hunt. **Recruiting new hunters.** Many young people have school or athletic obligations on Saturday. Sunday hunting allows parents time to hunt with their son/daughter. With the myriad of activities that compete for the attention of young people today, a Sunday hunting restriction means many of them never take up the sport.
- 11. Eliminates the last remaining CT Blue Law.** In the early days of America, so-called blue laws restricted many activities on Sunday. In recent years, however, state governments have recognized that the people's right to choose for themselves what they do, or don't do, on Sunday is more consistent with

America's founding principals. The present day ban on Sunday hunting is the last holdout of CT blue laws, and hunters are questioning why they are being treated differently from their fellow citizens. (42 States have Sunday Hunting; those that do not are of the original 13 colonies).

The Sunday Hunting prohibition has been an impediment to DEP wildlife management for too long. This bill will allow DEP wildlife experts to set seasons and take to improve Deer management. We'd ask you to refuse to maintain the status quo which ignores obvious ecological problems (Forestry regeneration, non-game species declines), public safety (Deer/Car Collisions), public health (Lyme disease), and property damage problems.

We urge you to Support Sunday Hunting and act to promote this effort as essential to wildlife management and the public interest of the state. **If Not Sunday Hunting – What IS the solution to an ever-expanding Deer management problem?**