

3/15/14

Environment Committee
Room 3200, Legislative office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: HB 5080 An Act Concerning Deer Management Programs On Private Property and Authorizing Bow and Arrow Hunting on Private Property on Sundays.

Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee:

I am writing in full support of HB 5080, which would allow archery hunting on Sundays. I firmly believe that after at least ten years of attempting to introduce similar legislation, the sportsmen and women of this state deserve to let our democracy play out in its entirety and bring this issue to a full vote in both the House and Senate. The fact that this legislation was not called for a vote in the House during the previous legislative session and allowed to die on the calendar, despite overwhelming bipartisan support, is extremely disappointing. Please restore my faith in the legislative process!

I know that in the past the DEEP has testified in support of this legislation as a deer management measure, which should be obvious to anyone following the previous discussions. Adding Sundays to the existing archery deer season would effectively double the available opportunity for archers since most hard working hunters with families have many Saturday commitments that interfere with the ability to actively participate. I also understand that there are some current ongoing discussions in your Committee about allowing Sunday bow hunting only in zones designated by the DEEP Commissioner, in furthering the need for more effective deer management where it is most needed.

I have some concerns that I wish to express.

First, from my perspective as a sportsman and friend of many landowners who have graciously allowed me to access their properties for hunting in the past, the proposed legislation is much more than about deer management. It is about property ownership rights and the ability of landowners to decide who, when and for what purpose others may enter their land to enjoy all that it has to offer. The claims from those concerned about their own safety, while TRESPASSING on private property are completely without merit and not supported any national hunter safety statistics, including the insurance industry. Connecticut has a strong legislative history in supporting the rights of property owners and the Sunday hunting issue deserves to receive continuing support for such owners.

Secondly, hunting in our state and the future direction of law, regulation and policy should not be all about the need to manage overabundant species of wildlife. I am particularly troubled that hunting may be restricted in the future if a clear management need can no longer be demonstrated. It just seems to me that we are heading in that direction and I remain deeply concerned about the future of a conservation ethic that is so deeply ingrained into the reasons why I choose to hunt. I hunt for pure enjoyment as just another form of outdoor RECREATION

that provides me a great return. I hunt for a natural, organic, green, healthy meat resource that cannot be duplicated. I hunt, because I can be part of a hunting heritage and the challenge offered by matching a hunter's skill with that of his prey. Please do not make the Sunday hunting issue as one that is necessary solely because of wildlife management concerns.

While I fully recognize that a compromise may be required to finally move the Sunday hunting agenda forward, please consider my thoughts as you deliberate the final language in the bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

A Supportive But Concerned Sportsman
Tolland, CT

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