March 7, 2014

Environment Committee
Connecticut General Assembly
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Ave Hartford, CT 06106

Re: H.B. No.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 Environmental Committee:

I am writing in support of H.B 5080. Connecticut's Sunday hunting ban is simply an antiquated blue law that needs to be repealed.

Employment or school requires most hunters to work or study from Monday to Friday and this leaves only Saturday for hunting. This means hunters have only 16 days out of the year. Once you add inclement weather, family obligations and other family or work activities, this really leaves no available time for hunting. Allowing Sunday hunting will increase the opportunities we have to enjoy the outdoors and sport we love an additional 16 days.

We are all outdoors men/women and we eat what we harvest. The majority of us use the venison harvested to save in groceries and many of us share our bounty with family and friend in need. Lots of hunters also contribute to Hunt to Feed. Hunt to Feed is an organization that donates venison to the less fortunately. According to the CT Food Bank, more than 390,000 Connecticut residents are struggling today with hunger. Each deer donated by hunters can yield 200 meals.

SAFETY:
There is no recorded incident in Connecticut's history of a by stander or a non-hunter to ever, EVER being injured by a bow hunter.

FACTS:
Deer/Car collisions, Lyme disease occurrence, and property damage are all increasing. Hunting is the ONLY proven population management technique available for Deer.
Large populations of White-tailed deer have been identified as a primary threat to the health and diversity of our forested landscapes.

In Southwest Connecticut, the density of deer ranges between 40 and 100 deer per square mile. Densities in excess of 20 per mile can result in suppression of forest regeneration and reduction of biological and structural diversity. Lowering the number of deer per square mile reduces the risk of Lyme Decease.

Few hunters will take extended hunting trips to a state that won't let them hunt on Sunday. Out-of-state hunters pay higher license fees benefitting DEEP and spend even more money than in-state hunters on gas, food, lodging and other incidentals that go along with a day's hunt

I am asking you to defend landowner rights by allowing landowners to determine who, where, when, and what activities should occur on our properties.

It is ridiculous that an activity that is SAFE and LEGAL 6 days of the week is illegal one day.

Sincerely, Mark R. Bell

Mark R. Bell