



Connecticut Department of  
**ENERGY &  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION**

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Public Hearing – March 20, 2015  
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Robert J. Klee  
Presented By Deputy Commissioner Susan K. Whalen

**Raised House Bill No. 6034 - AN ACT AUTHORIZING BOW AND ARROW HUNTING ON CERTAIN PRIVATE PROPERTY ON SUNDAYS.**

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding **Raised House Bill No. 6034 - AN ACT AUTHORIZING BOW AND ARROW HUNTING ON CERTAIN PRIVATE PROPERTY ON SUNDAYS**. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) welcomes the opportunity to offer the following testimony.

DEEP continues to support provisions of proposals that allow for Sunday hunting with a bow and arrow on private lands as a white-tailed deer population management measure. We look forward to being able to employ this tool to further advance science-based management of our deer populations and wildlife habitats.

Sunday hunting is an important and proven measure used in 42 states to achieve wildlife management objectives. Since 2000, DEEP has increased bag limits, lengthened seasons, implemented a January crossbow season and authorized baiting to increase harvest in deer management zones where white-tailed deer are over-abundant. Sunday hunting is one of the last remaining progressive measures designed to meet management objectives. In areas with high densities, deer are causing extensive damage to ecosystems and property and elevating public health and safety risks through tick-borne illnesses and vehicle collisions. The addition of Sundays during the private land archery deer seasons would significantly increase deer harvest by increasing hunter opportunity. DEEP anticipates that harvest rates on Sundays would be similar to those observed on Saturdays, currently the day during which harvest is greatest.

Decades of research have shown bow hunting to be a safe, effective, and efficient tool for managing abundant deer populations. Forty-eight percent of the total 2014 harvest of nearly 11,400 deer was reported by archers. In some areas, archers are responsible for more than 90% of the harvest.

In general, hunting is a safe outdoor activity and bow hunting is extremely safe, especially for other outdoor users. Not a single non-hunter has been injured by a bow hunter during millions of hunter-days afield since passage of the Deer Management Act in 1974. Even though there is an excellent safety record for Connecticut bow hunters, DEEP supports the position that landowners should retain the right to determine who recreates on their properties, whether it is for hunting, hiking, or other outdoor pursuits. This proposed bill includes a provision that no person shall hunt with a bow and arrow on Sunday within forty yards of a

blazed hiking trail. Although there is no evidence to support the contention that archery hunting threatens public safety, this provision will allay the perceptions of some outdoor recreationalists.

Finally, the addition of Sunday hunting would provide positive economic benefits and add value to sporting licenses. The 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife Associated Recreation reported that hunters alone expended 69 million dollars in pursuit of hunting-related activities in Connecticut.

In summary, DEEP is confident that the addition of Sunday bow hunting on private lands would play a significant role in meeting deer management objectives and provide significant economic benefits without compromising the safety or interests of other outdoor users.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact Robert LaFrance, DEEP's Director of Governmental Affairs, at 860.424.3401 or [Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov](mailto:Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov) or, Elizabeth McAuliffe, DEEP Legislative Liaison, at 860.424.3458 or [Elizabeth.McAuliffe@ct.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.McAuliffe@ct.gov).