

PUBLIC TESTIMONY: ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MARCH 20, 2015

H.B. No. 6034 (RAISED): AN ACT AUTHORIZING BOW AND ARROW HUNTING ON SUNDAY
UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES

Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee:

I am writing in full support of Sunday archery hunting on private lands. Clearly, this antiquated blue law serves little purpose and still remains on the books for no other reason than it has yet to be addressed. A similar antiquated blue law, prohibited sale of alcohol on Sundays, was reversed by the Connecticut Legislature under the Malloy administration as a potential revenue stream. Permitting Sunday archery hunting on private lands is another General Fund revenue stream.

Is Sunday hunting going to solve statewide tick-borne disease problems? The reality is no it will not. However, because deer abundances have been shown to be positively correlated with tick abundances, those private landowners who opt to have deer managed on their lands will likely see both reduced tick abundances and associated disease risk as will their neighbors.

Is Sunday hunting on private land going to endanger the Connecticut public? No. Any landowner who permits deer hunting is required to give written permission to legal hunters on their property. Clearly the property owner will be well aware of legal hunter presence and can govern others' access to their property as they see fit. Additionally, there have been zero injuries to non-participants by Connecticut archers since passage of the Deer Management Act in 1974.

Sunday archery hunting on private land will likely result in a slight increase in take of deer, resulting in localized reductions in deer-vehicle collisions, landscape and ecosystem damage, and ticks and tick-borne disease risk. The majority of Connecticut hunters are working class and another day afield on the weekend would certainly be appreciated by those of us who pay for this privilege. Additionally, I am having trouble understanding how it is now legal to purchase alcohol 52 Sundays/year when in 2014 alone there were 114 drunk driving fatalities in Connecticut, yet archery hunting with 0 injuries to non-participants in over 40 years is still prohibited. Permitting archery hunting on private lands for up to 20 Sundays/year is a safe way to alleviate some of the stresses to public safety and ecosystem health as the result of chronically overabundant deer populations.

Thank you and thank you for your service to the State of Connecticut.

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