

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 747 (Senator Astle)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Wildlife Management - Shooting at Nighttime

This bill prohibits the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) from authorizing a deer management permittee or his/her agent to shoot or discharge a firearm at nighttime. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2018.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect State operations or finances. The bill is expected to apply only in a limited number of cases.

Local Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect local operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: Minimal or none.

Analysis

Current Law:

Hunting at Nighttime

Hunting any game bird or mammal at “nighttime” is generally prohibited, except for specified species. “Nighttime” means the time beginning one-half hour after sunset and ending one-half hour before sunrise the following day, as published in DNR’s hunter’s guide, unless otherwise provided by statute. With specified exceptions, a person may not hunt at nighttime with a light, including with the headlights of a vehicle. Raccoon, fox, coyote, or opossum may be hunted on foot at nighttime during open season with the use of a dog or light, or both.

Deer Management Permit

Maryland landowners or agricultural lessees who are experiencing severe economic loss from deer to commercially grown crops (including row crops, truck crops, pasture, nursery stock, orchards, and certain tree plantings) may be eligible to receive a deer management permit. Deer management permits allow the permittee or his/her agent to remove deer from the designated property outside any deer bag limits and/or the established deer hunting seasons, including on any Sunday throughout the year.

Background: DNR advises that only one deer management permit in recent years has allowed nighttime hunting.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources; Department of Legislative Services

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