

Testimony of the Maryland Horse Council on HB 579
Cecil County - Snare Traps - Repeal of Prohibitions - OPPOSED



MARYLAND HORSE COUNCIL
PO BOX 606
LISBON, MD 21765

The Maryland Horse Council (MHC) is a membership-based, umbrella trade association of the entire horse industry in Maryland. Our membership includes horse farms, horse related businesses, individual enthusiasts, and breed, interest and discipline associations. As such, we represent over 30,000 Marylanders who make their living with horses, or just own and love them.

The majority of Maryland's horseback riders are trail riders, and many are accompanied by their pet dogs. In addition, fox chasers and hunters of small mammals and game birds use hounds and gun dogs as part of their sport, and all of them would be vulnerable to being caught in snare traps. Cecil County is remarkably rich in public land and natural resources that draw visitors from all over the state and from beyond its borders. Many of these lands abut private land on which snare traps would be permitted by this bill. Those traps would become a source of peril to pet, sporting, and hunting dogs who might accidentally stray into them.

Snare traps are silent and deadly, and often the ensnared animal is unable to make a sound to identify its location and bring help. If not found and freed, these animals die a slow, agonizing and painful death. This video details the steps necessary to free a dog from a snare trap. A stuffed animal is used to illustrate how to manipulate the tiny locks that have closed tightly around the neck of the ensnared dog. Ordinary wire cutters do not work. Imagine a frightened and anxious owner trying to do this to free a frightened, desperate and struggling dog. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j1MVqFYflhw>

These traps serve no useful purpose in wildlife control that is outweighed by the horrific consequences they may have for domestic animals and un-targeted wildlife. They should not be permitted in Cecil County.

We urge the Committee to give HB 579 an unfavorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

The Maryland Horse Council
(844) MDHORSE (844-634-6773)