

SUPPORT: HB 293 to Prohibit Wildlife Killing Contests in Maryland
January 15, 2021

Chair Barve and Members of the Committee:

My name is Randy Morgan and I'm a resident of Prince Frederick, Maryland. As a lifelong hunter, I strongly support HB 293. This legislation would prohibit a dishonorable and wasteful practice that is a stain on the reputation of Maryland's hunting community.

Killing animals for cash and prizes is a disgrace. As a hunter, it's not something I could ever support. Responsible hunters respect wildlife and their habitats. We spend countless hours studying the animals we hunt, and patiently stalk to place ourselves in a position to ensure a quick and humane kill. We kill no more than we need and make good use of the animals. Hunting is a valuable skill passed down from generation to generation—a pastime that we share with our friends and family.

Only a small percentage of people engage in wildlife killing contests, yet they have a disproportionate impact on how the public views hunters. Hunting should never be a contest to see who can kill the most animals. In fact, I don't view these events as hunting at all—to me, they are a bloodsport.

Killing contests do a disservice to hunters in more ways than one. Coyotes and foxes, for example, benefit ground nesting birds like quail and waterfowl by limiting species like skunks and opossums that prey on nests. They're top carnivores that help keep our wildlife and ecosystems robust, and they don't compete with us hunters for game.

This bill won't prohibit the hunting of foxes or coyotes—people will still have ample opportunity to do so, they just won't be able to do it in organized games that offer cash prizes for an animal's life.

As a Maryland resident and as a hunter, I feel that this bloodsport devalues our wildlife and desecrates our centuries-old hunting traditions. For these reasons, I urge the committee to support this bill. Thank you.

Randy Morgan
1905 Organic Way
Prince Frederick, Maryland
randylemorgan@gmail.com