



Larry Hogan, Governor  
Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor  
Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary

February 17, 2021

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve  
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee  
250 House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Dana Stein  
Vice Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee  
Room 251, House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

***Re: Letter of Support – House Bill 325 – Talbot County – Deer Hunting – Sundays***

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources supports House Bill (HB) 325. This bill, as amended by the sponsor, allows a person in Talbot County to hunt each Sunday of deer season as well as each Sunday of the Spring turkey season. Public lands, of which there is only one 121-acre parcel in the county, will also be open for Sundays. Talbot County is currently authorized for deer hunting on two Sundays during the firearms season as well as five Sundays during the archery season. Sunday hunting during the Spring turkey season is currently not authorized.

In general, the department strongly supports the self-determination of local jurisdictions to expand hunting opportunities within State, and federal rules and regulations. Hunting remains the most cost-effective method for controlling and managing the deer population throughout most of the State. Sunday hunting is important for expanding deer harvest opportunities if the weather causes unfavorable hunting conditions on the Saturday of the same weekend. Likewise, many hunters only have time to hunt on the weekends, and allowing Sunday hunting essentially doubles their opportunity to pursue deer and other game species.

The department therefore believes that recreational hunting will increase in Talbot County by an additional 500 days for deer and 100 days for turkey. On Sundays during the 2019-2020 deer seasons in Talbot County, 101 deer were harvested. The department also estimates that approximately 50 more deer would be harvested on the additional Sundays in Talbot County, though this number depends greatly on how the Sundays were allocated for the three weapon seasons. In sum, increased opportunities to hunt

deer and turkey in Talbot County will result in a positive economic and environmental impact for the local recreational hunting industry.

As to HB 325 authorizing Sunday hunting on public land in Talbot County, there is only one parcel — the Seth Demonstration Forest — that could be opened. This 121-acre property is currently opened for deer archery hunting and requires a permit from the department.

For these reasons, the department respectfully requests the committee to grant HB 325 a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

James W. McKitrick  
Director, Legislative and Constituent Services