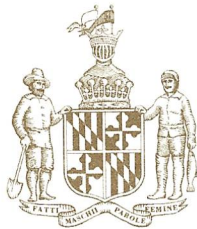


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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 9, 2021

**The Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Senate Bill 98 Somerset County - Natural Resources - Sunday Hunting
Statement of Support by Bill Sponsor Senator Mary Beth Carozza**

Thank you Chairman Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee for the opportunity to respectfully ask for your support of Senate Bill 98 Somerset County - Natural Resources - Sunday Hunting. This would authorize the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to allow an individual in Somerset County to hunt on private property on each Sunday of game bird and game mammal season. It would also allow Sunday hunting on public land to Somerset County leased to a hunt club.

This legislation would add Somerset County to the current list of Counties that are permitted to hunt on each Sunday of the game bird and game mammal seasons including Allegany County, Cecil County, Garrett County, St. Mary's County, Washington County as mentioned in Article - Natural Resources §10-410(a)(1). It also would allow Somerset County (leased to a hunt club) to hunt on public land along with Allegany County, Cecil County, Garrett County, St. Mary's County, Washington County, Dorchester County, and Frederick County as mentioned in §10-410(a)(15).

It's important to note the rural aspects of Somerset County as the southernmost county and the second-least populated county in Maryland. Many of you have enjoyed the scenic drive to Tawes Crab and Clam Bake along Routes 13 and 413 but that is only a sliver of Somerset County's natural charm. Given that the Maryland General Assembly has approved Sunday hunting for seven other Maryland counties, it's only fair that Somerset County should have the same rights.

Last year, the Somerset County hunting bill (HB 840) passed the House of Delegates by 125-10 but did not move in the Senate. As a priority local Somerset County bill, I prefiled Senate Bill 98 as a request from the Somerset County Commissioners and local hunters and their families. This legislation would give Somerset County families more time to hunt during a limited season for game bird and game mammals. This legislation simply would provide Somerset County hunters with the same benefits of several other counties that allow Sunday hunting and hunting on public land.

My panel will explain more of the family hunting and safety traditions in Somerset County, and the local benefits of this legislation. The panel includes Ashley Webster, an active hunter in Somerset County and Jamie Wink of Wink's Sporting Goods in Princess Anne. I respectfully ask my colleagues on the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee for a favorable report on Senate Bill 98.

Thank you for your kind consideration of this local bill.