



P.O. Box 501  
Huntingtown, Maryland 20639

February 15, 2023

THE HONORABLE KUMAR BARVE AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE ENVIRONMENT AND  
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

**RE: SUPPORT FOR HOUSE BILL 378 (Natural Resources – Black Bear Conflict Reduction  
and Damage Reimbursement Fund -- Uses)**

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The HUNTERS OF MARYLAND represent the interests of Maryland's hunting community at both the State and local level. Few realize that hunters underwrite almost 100% of all wildlife management and research costs through their purchase of hunting licenses, stamps and equipment. For the record, hunters do so willingly b/c of **American System of Conservation Funding**, a user-pay model celebrating its 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary which also underscores the noble story of hunters as America's original conservationists.

[https://wdfw.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-06/introduction\\_to\\_american\\_conservation\\_funding\\_.pdf](https://wdfw.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-06/introduction_to_american_conservation_funding_.pdf)

Steve Keithley, Founder (301/785-4774 [sssbkeith@comcast.net])  
William R. Miles, Advocate (443/404-7449 [billmilesmd@comcast.net])

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The HUNTERS OF MARYLAND support House Bill 378 b/c the State has a responsibility to mitigate potentially fatal conflicts between bears and humans. Taking of bears by hunters is a proven means of management control; but, hunting per se cannot prevent bear/human conflicts as Maryland's bear population continues to increase. We commend Senators West and McKay for proposing this commonsense approach as duly articulated by HSUS, et al.

We do have one idea for the Committee's consideration re the \$1 million mandated spending for proposed Black Bear Conflict Reduction and Damage Reimbursement Fund. Legislation is pending consideration by the 2023 General Assembly which would increase hunting license/stamp sales with some estimates circulating that the increase could annually generate \$8 million plus in special fund revenues, aka HB 378. It would be a fair and proper use of these dollars for the purposes intended by House Bill 378.

Respectfully submitted,

William R. Miles, Advocate