

# SB 983 - Hunting – Lead Ammunition phase out.

## OPPOSE SB983

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Committee Members,

I have been a Maryland hunter for decades; I am a member of Deer management with 2 counties, and a DNR Maryland Hunter Education instructor.

(I am placing the conclusion at the beginning, for those who do not want to read the details)

### **Conclusion**

- A "one size fits all" approach will not work with hunting ammunition.
- While there is copper ammo that performs in High powered rifles, Copper does not perform well in slower moving slugs used in the majority of MD counties. There are a limited number of copper shotgun slugs, but not yet perfected or in numbers to supply hunters.
- Traditional Muzzle Loaders (Black powder) would be banned.
- Some Straight wall cartridge (SWC) rifles used by MD hunters do not have a lead free alternative that meets the Minimum 1200 ft/lb for deer hunting (44m, 357m are two)
- MD deer hunters do not leave the carcass in the woods like western hunters, MD could simply have hunter bury the gut pile or remove it to alleviate any fears.
- Many hunters buy ammo in bulk once a round is found to pattern in their gun,, It will take a few years to run through this ammo.
- 22 rimfire ammo does not have a viable lead free alternative.
  
- The KEY to reducing the use of lead based ammo in hunting is education. Information about the hazards of lead should be added to the MD DNR Hunters guide and added to the Hunter safety Education curriculum. Then as viable Lead free alternatives become available, incentives should be given to use lead free ammo. This has worked well in western states that primarily hunt with high powered rifles. A blanket outright ban that would ban many hunting weapons and types of hunting is NOT the way to go about this change. I would be more than happy to work with any legislator who wants to work on a common sense education and incentive based transition to alternative ammunition types.

## Deer Hunting

I received a copy of SB 983 (Lead ammo ban) and contacted Senator Young's office and requested background information/studies pertaining specifically to Issues in Maryland with lead based ammo, Specifically Shotgun slugs and Straight wall cartridge (SWC) rifle ammo that is legal in most of the counties.

Senator Young's office forwarded me a copy of an article relating to hunters in Norway using high powered rifles. A high Powered rifle fires a smaller streamlined bullet at over 3000 Feet per second (FPS), A copper bullet will marginally expand at these extreme speeds.

A shotgun and SWC fires a heavy, slow slug at typically 1200-1500 FPS.

A copper slug will not expand moving at this slow speed, resulting in injured and unrecovered deer.

Over 25 years I have shot around 90 deer with all lead 20gauge shotgun slugs, I recovered 90% of the slugs just inside the opposite side hide of the deer,, Not a single slug had ever "fragmented". The slow moving slugs required to be used in a majority of Maryland simply do not fragment, but require soft lead to expand. Years ago I attempted to use "Remington Copper Solid Slugs" , they did not perform and have since been discontinued.

The Article links to a 2007 and 2009 paper discussing high powered rifle bullets fragmenting. High powered rifle bullets went through drastic re-designs in the last 15 years as they pushed them faster and faster. "Fragmentation" is no longer a problem even in high powered rifles using bullets such as the "Swift A-frame" and similar.

Another major issue this ban would place an undo hardship on many Maryland hunters.

Maryland deer regulations require a rifle/ammo produce a minimum energy of 1200 FT/LB of energy, I personally will not shoot a deer with less than 1500 FT/LB.

Some of the more popular SWC Lever action rifles bought by MD hunters do not have a copper ammo that meets this min requirement.

I purchased a Henry 44m lever action rifle last month to start using next season (\$1200),

There are NO commercially available copper base ammo that is advertised to meet the 1200 FT/LB min. (the min is marginal, 1500 is my bottom), most of the copper based 44m ammo is advertised at 900-1000 FT/LB. Same goes with 357m rifles.

It is physically impossible for a copper bullet to achieve the energy levels in these carbine cartridges. And if they did, they would not expand to transfer that energy.

Traditional muzzle loaders will be out of luck, no hunting with those weapons either.

MD hunters do not leave the deer carcass in the woods, the entire deer is taken from the hunting grounds. "IF" there was a possibility that the gut pile had lead, a simple, NO COST to the state solution would be to have hunters remove the gut pile or bury it.

### Small game Hunting – 22 rimfire.

.22 rimfire is commonly used for small game hunting, Squirrel in particular.

1<sup>st</sup> - Currently there is no readily available non-lead .22 ammo produced.

2<sup>nd</sup> – it is impossible to produce a subsonic 22 cartridge. In more populated states such as MD, one typically uses a subsonic 22 ammo moving at 720-970 FPS,, The since discontinued copper 22 rounds had a velocity of 1700-1800 FPS. you do NOT want to be shooting into trees with a high velocity round, that would be highly unsafe.

3<sup>rd</sup> – all domestic (USA) attempts to produce a non lead 22 ammo have been abandoned.

CCI Copper-22 : discontinued

CCI 21 grain Green HP – Discontinued

Winchester 26 grain HP – X22LRHLF : out of stock across the board, does not appear to have been produced for almost a year?

The reason there is no US made non lead 22 ammo is that it plain does not work.

Below pictures are from video <https://youtu.be/RRtrbsPujYE?t=390>



# CCI Copper-22 Ammunition 22 Long Rifle 21 Grain Copper Hollow Point Lead-Free

★★★★★ (62) Write a Review Q&A (7)

Product Family #: 953365521



List Price: ~~\$14.99~~ - ~~\$1499.00~~  
Our Price: **\$11.99** - **\$1207.99**  
(\$0.24 - \$0.24 per round)

**Discontinued**

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