

TESTIMONY OF THE UNITED BOWHUNTERS OF PENNSYLVANIA TO,  
THE STATE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE HEARING ON HOUSE BILL 2083

SEPTEMBER 20, 2016

Good morning Chairman Metcalfe, Democratic Chairman Cohen, and members of the State Government Committee. My name is Wes Waldron and I am here today representing the United Bowhunters of Pennsylvania.

The UBP has a current membership of approximately 2800 members spread across the Commonwealth, and this number fluctuates according to what issues may arise that threaten the sport of bow hunting. The organization prides itself in its strict adherence to a mission statement that includes the promotion, protection, and preservation of bow hunting opportunity, but more importantly that it strongly supports game management based upon sound biological and scientific principles and a resource-first philosophy. These precepts are why we oppose the proposals in House Bill 2083.

The UBP and most bow hunters believe that should House Bill 2083 become law, and the powers and responsibilities of managing white-tailed deer and the habitat they require are wrested from the Pennsylvania Game Commission and placed in the hands of those unqualified for those responsibilities, that little benefit to either resource will be realized. In fact, we would expect to see a rapid return to the over-population of deer that plagued this state for almost 100-years, and all the negatives that resulted from those years of mismanagement.

With the forest and woodlands in some areas of our northern tier still unrecovered from decades of over-browsing by deer, and the advocates and architects of this proposed legislation want to allow increases to deer populations? Please. With farmers, tree growers, fruit and vegetable growers still experiencing depredations to their livelihood and one sportsmen's organization believes there are not enough deer in Pennsylvania! Tell *those* people that there are no deer, and then tell them you plan to once again let the deer proliferate by reducing antlerless deer hunting opportunity and listen to their response.

The UBP has always believed that when it comes to management of the game and habitat resources of the Commonwealth, that accredited professionals are best suited - and preferred- to accomplish the task, as opposed to those unaccredited and unqualified. Junk science, false and unsubstantiated anecdotal observations, personal opinions, and the efforts of disgruntled individuals should not take precedent over the recommendations and decisions of career professionals.

The one stipulation in House Bill 2083 that begs refute is that of *Maximum Sustained Yield*. This concept, developed in the 1930's and later abandon by professional wildlife managers due to its theoretical implausibility, is neither ethically or morally acceptable in regard to wise habitat and wildlife management. Those who support a return to this type of management have little apparent recognition that a return to this management method has the potential to once again return Pennsylvania to an era where deer were allowed to proliferate just to satisfy social laments. As history has borne out, this type of management will produce deer numbers that will quickly create a situation where the habitat is unable to support the increased population. It must be recognized that the Legislature was in part responsible for the destruction of our forests and woodlands-not to mention its negative impact on

agricultural crops- by satisfying the social wishes over the PGC biologists recommendations and allowing the over-abundance of deer to continue for far too many years.

The United Bowhunters of Pennsylvania respectfully ask that this Committee recognize House Bill 2083 for its callous attempts to satisfy the wishes of a minority with personal agendas, and without regard to the science and biology of competent game and habitat management. And that you dismiss this piece of legislation for its attempts to remove management of white-tailed deer and habitat from the hands of professionals and place it in the hands of a disgruntled and unqualified minority.

S. Wesley Waldron, Chairman UBP Legislative Committee

570-995-9208 – home 570-220-9218 – cell [swmuldoon@verizon.net](mailto:swmuldoon@verizon.net)

Rick Conley, President United Bowhunters of Pennsylvania

717-940-2191 [rickconley@primarystaffing.com](mailto:rickconley@primarystaffing.com)