



Honorable Keith Gillespie
Game and Fisheries Committee
45 East Wing
PO Box 202047
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2047

Honorable William C. Kortz II
Game and Fisheries Committee
114 Irvis Office Building
PO Box 202038
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2038

RE: Senate Bill 147: *An Act amending Title 34 (Game) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in Pennsylvania Game Commission, further providing for accountability; and, in hunting and furtaking, further providing for hunting on Sunday prohibited and for trespass on private property while hunting.*

Position: SUPPORT

September 3, 2019

Chairman Gillespie, Ranking Member Kortz and members of the House Game and Fisheries Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in advance of the September 10th public hearing on Sunday Hunting.

My name is Don Detwiler, and I am a proud Pennsylvania hunter, a Pennsylvania resident and the Vice President of Safari Club International (SCI). On behalf of our 1500 members in Pennsylvania, I am excited to support Senate Bill 147 which would expand additional hunting opportunities for Pennsylvania sportsmen and women by allowing hunting on three Sundays a year.

For reference, Safari Club International is a not-for-profit, 501(c)4 organization dedicated to protecting the freedom to hunt both domestically and internationally. SCI is the leading voice in the fight to protect the freedom to hunt, both in the United States and internationally. SCI's Departments of Legal Advocacy Resources and International Affairs and Government Relations are headquartered in Washington, D.C., advocating on behalf of SCI members and non-members alike.

According to the 2016 United States Fish and Wildlife Service National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, & Wildlife-Associated Recreation, there are around 11.5 million hunters in the United States. That number is down by over 2 million hunters from the last survey in 2011 and is sharp contrast from the peak of hunting participation of over 17 million hunters in 1982. (U.S. Department of the Interior, 2016)

That trend is seen right here in Pennsylvania as well. From 2007 to 2017, Pennsylvania's junior hunting licenses sales dropped by almost 20,000 licenses. Hunters continually cite "lack of time" as one of the number one reasons they stop hunting or are hesitant to begin altogether. Allowing more opportunities will help recruit and retain a robust population of sportsmen and women that is needed to not only provide critical funding for conservation efforts in the Keystone State, but to ensure our hunting heritage remains strong.

Hunting licenses sales, as well as Pittman-Robertson apportionments are the major funding sources for the Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC). Both of these critical revenue streams are dependent on strong hunter participation numbers to allow PGC to do the important conservation work, not only for the game species that hunters pursue, but also non-game species and the habitat they thrive in that everyone enjoys.

Repealing the antiquated blue law that prohibits hunting on Sundays in the Commonwealth will allow sportsmen and women to be treated the same as other Pennsylvania residents who participate in their hobby and passion of choice on Sundays. Currently, Pennsylvania residents can hike, bike, kayak, golf, fish and even gamble legally on Sundays. This stance ignores the fact that not only is hunting a deep part of Pennsylvania's tradition and history, but also Pennsylvania sportsmen and women directly contribute billions of dollars each year to the economy while directly supporting over 25,000 jobs.

A study commissioned by the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation and the National Shooting Sports Foundation with support from Safari Club International shows that eliminating the Sunday hunting ban across all seasons would create a total of 8,193 new jobs (direct and indirect) and provide an economic boost of more than \$764 million for the Pennsylvania economy. (National Shooting Sports Foundation, 2013)

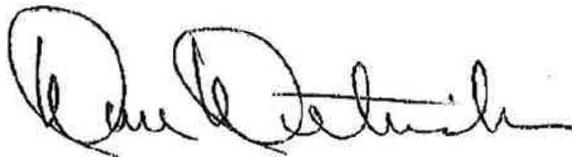
In closing, Safari Club International is very supportive of any efforts that seeks to expand hunting opportunities in Pennsylvania and will help pass on the rich tradition of hunting to the next generation of sportsmen and women in the Commonwealth. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony for this hearing, and I respectfully urge your support in passage of Senate Bill 147.

CC:

Senator Dan Laughlin
Representative Torren C. Ecker, Secretary
Representative Barry J. Jozwiak Vice Chair
Representative Aaron Bernstine
Representative Bud Cook
Representative Garth D. Everett
Representative Mindy Fee
Representative Barbara Gleim
Representative David M. Maloney Sr.
Representative Thomas L. Mehaffie, III
Representative Clint Owlett
Representative Mike Tobash

Representative Justin M. Walsh
Representative Ryan Warner
Representative Parke Wentling
Representative Anita Astorino Kulik Dem. Sec.
Representative Gerald J., Mullery Dem Vice Chair
Representative David M. Dellosa
Representative Bridget M. Kosierowski
Representative Robert E. Merski
Representative Kyle J. Mullins
Representative Ed Neilson
Representative Adam Ravenstahl
Representative Brian Sims

Respectfully,



References

- National Shooting Sports Foundation. (2013). *The Economic Impact of Sunday Hunting*. National Shooting Sports Foundation.
- U.S. Department of the Interior, U. F. (2016). *National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, & Wildlife-Associated Recreation (FHWAR): 2016*. United States Fish and Wildlife Service.