



**To:** Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy  
Vermont State House  
115 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05633

**Re:** S. 129 – An Act Relating to the Management of Fish and Wildlife  
S. 201 – An Act Relating to the Use of Leghold Traps  
S. 281 – An Act Relating to Hunting Coyotes with Dogs

**Position:** Oppose

**Date:** February 1, 2022

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Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy:

My name is Joseph Mullin and I am the Assistant Manager, Northeastern States for the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF). As an avid sportsman and Vermont hunting license holder, I write to you in opposition to three bills that pose to undermine some of Vermont's time-honored traditions – S. 129, S. 201, and S. 281. Collectively these bills would result in far-reaching negative impacts on Vermont's sporting traditions which are celebrated components of the state's cultural fabric.

Since 1989, CSF has dedicated itself to the mission of working with Congress, governors, and state legislatures to protect and advance hunting, angling, recreational shooting and trapping. The unique and collective force of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, the Governors Sportsmen's Caucus, and the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses, working closely with CSF, and with the support of major hunting, recreational fishing and shooting, and trapping organizations, serves as an unprecedented network of pro-sportsmen elected officials that advance the conservation interests of America's hunters and anglers.

CSF opposes any efforts to undermine the structure and integrity of the Fish and Wildlife Board. Overhauling the Board's composition is unneeded and will serve no purpose other than to lead to obstructionism which will in turn negatively impact the efficiency of the rulemaking process. For this reason, I urge you to oppose S. 129.

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CSF supports the continued use of trapping and regulated take as important components of modern wildlife management in Vermont and therefore opposes the attempt to undermine trapping through S. 201, which would prohibit the use of leghold traps. The varying instruments used in this practice have all been rigorously evaluated for their efficiency, selectivity, practicality, safety, and animal welfare, and can uniquely address a wide breadth of wildlife management challenges in Vermont. For this reason, I urge you to oppose S. 201.

S. 281 is a misguided bill that would eliminate the use of dogs while pursuing coyotes, wholly undermining the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's authority to promulgate regulations on the taking of coyotes. The Department, relying on their existing science-based processes that include both biological and social data, is unquestionably in the best position to determine whether the use of dogs for coyote hunting should be banned, and it is for this reason that I encourage your opposition to S. 281.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy to oppose S. 129, S. 201, and S. 281. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this issue. Should you require any additional information on this, or any other sportsmen-related topic, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph D. Mullin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joseph Mullin  
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