



To: **The Honorable Maura Healey, Governor of Massachusetts**
24 Beacon St.
Office of the Governor
Room 280
Boston, MA 02133

Re: **House Bill 4885- An act modernizing firearm laws**

Position: **Oppose**

Date: **July 19, 2024**

To the Honorable Maura Healey, Governor of Massachusetts,

My name is Christian Ragosta, and I am the Northeastern States Assistant Manager for the Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation (CSF). I write to you today to express our concerns regarding H.4885, “an act modernizing firearm laws.” As written, certain provisions of this potential law are likely to have a chilling effect on youth and nonresident hunting. Specifically, semiautomatic shotguns represent a significant style of firearm used in the ethical harvesting of game such as ducks, pheasants, grouse, turkey, etc. Barring access to a hunter’s personal choice or mandating a costly purchase of new tools, for those with handed down firearms or previously purchased semiautomatic shotguns, will cause considerable harm to those looking to enter the hunting sports at an early age or those who desire to partake in nonresident hunting or sporting activities.

By adding semiautomatic shotguns into prohibited category, Section 129C subsection (i) explicitly disallows nonresidents to utilize semiautomatic shotguns unless they have a permit, card or licenses issued from their state “which has substantially similar requirements to those of the commonwealth for a firearm identification card...” This would restrict sportsmen and women from neighboring states such as New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine from hunting with semiautomatic shotguns in the Commonwealth.

CSF asks that you address the prohibitions on semiautomatic shotguns use for young sportsmen and women between the ages of 18 and 21. Firearms are often passed down from hunter to hunter and generation to generation. By prohibiting an entire style of firearm, commonly used for hunting purposes, young hunters may be forced to go through the costly process of replacing heritage hunting firearms or replace firearms they had purchased prior to this legislation. Ease of access and cost of joining the hunting sports are crucial factors in retaining and growing youth participation in wildlife management

through hunting.

It is our hope that you consider using your veto powers to address these issues. Last year, Massachusetts received nearly \$10 million from the American System of Conservation Funding which is apportioned by hunting license sales and funded through excise taxes on sporting goods. We ask you to not jeopardize essential conservation funding, by marginalizing those who hunt now and in the future in the commonwealth. Limiting access to nonresident hunters and adding barriers to youth access is a direct threat to federally matched conservation funding in Massachusetts.

Although these concerns only represent a portion of what is addressed in this legislation, it is the hope of CSF that legislation of this magnitude is given more time to appropriately flush out far-reaching concerns with impacts on conservation and the future of hunting in the commonwealth.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Ragosta', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Christian Ragosta
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