



To: **Hon. Jordan A. Harris**
Chair
House Appropriations Committee

Hon. Seth M. Grove
Republican Chair
House Appropriations Committee

Re: **Senate Bill 67 – Removal of Sunday Hunting Prohibitions**

Position: **Support**

Date: **11/8/2024**

Honorable Chair Harris, Republican Chair Grove, and Members of the House Appropriations Committee,

The undersigned organizations respectfully urge you to vote favorably on Senate Bill 67 (SB 67) – Removal of Sunday Hunting Prohibitions, to move this legislation out of Committee and onto the House Floor for third and final passage before the final adjournment of the 2023-2024 legislative session. SB 67 will remove the longstanding and antiquated prohibition on Sunday hunting. The passage of such legislation will finally allow the sportsmen and women of the Keystone State to participate in additional Sunday hunting opportunities and allow Pennsylvania to join the 47 other states that currently allow more robust Sunday hunting offerings.

Sunday hunting restrictions are one of the last remaining examples of the puritanical blue laws that were initially designed to encourage church attendance. At the time when these restrictions were first put in place, other activities were illegal on Sundays such as opening a store for business, drinking alcoholic beverages, and tilling your fields. The current restrictions are a major limiting factor hindering participation in hunting, and restrictions on Sunday hunting create a temporal-access barrier to youth and others that work or attend school throughout the week and are often involved in extra-curricular activities on Saturdays.

Pennsylvania took a step in the right direction in 2019, when the Pennsylvania Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus spearheaded the passage of [S 147](#), which was signed into law by Governor Tom Wolf. The passage of this bill and the subsequent regulations adopted by the PGC resulted in deer and bear hunting opportunities on Sundays in 2020 for the first time since the 19th century. Current law authorizes one day of deer hunting on Sundays during the archery season, one day of deer hunting during the firearm season, and one day left to the discretion of the Pennsylvania Game Commission for species and season determined by them, which through rulemaking was selected to be bear hunting during the bear firearms season.¹

As you are aware, the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Budget receives no General Fund monies and is solely comprised of sportsmen and women generated dollars. This includes revenues from the sale of timber and oil/gas/mineral extraction leases on Game Lands, in addition to federal match dollars through the Pittman-Robertson Act. In 2023 alone, the sale of hunting licenses contributed \$42.5M in Pennsylvania, which in turn provided an additional \$41M through the Pittman-Robertson Act, totaling around \$83.5M in conservation dollars for the state. The passage of SB 67 is likely to assist in increasing hunter participation, thus increasing conservation funding in the Keystone State.

The passage of SB 67 would significantly improve access and opportunity for Pennsylvania's sportsmen and women and will likely result in increased hunting participation. A lack of access is regularly cited as the number one reason that lapsed hunters give when asked why they decided to stop hunting, and the passage of such legislation would contribute to the recruitment, retention, and reactivation of sportsmen and women in the Commonwealth. Repealing laws restricting hunting on Sundays will likely increase participation, and license sales by extension, and will also have a positive impact on the state's economy and will strengthen the Keystone State's outdoor heritage. Additionally, the passage of this legislation will create the Agricultural Access Permit List, connecting licensed hunters with private agricultural landowners for the purpose of crop damage mitigation, strengthening the PGC's ability to continue to rely on hunting as the most effective and preferred means of managing wildlife populations, specifically focused on localized issues of overabundance on specific properties.

In closing, we the undersigned organizations that represent thousands of sportsmen and women in Pennsylvania, and across the United States, request that the Committee vote favorably on SB 67 so it may continue through the legislative process. The passage of this legislation will finally remove the antiquated blue law of Sunday hunting restrictions, allowing the residents of the Commonwealth the opportunity to enjoy their longstanding deep-rooted outdoor heritage when it best suits their schedules, within the confines of the regulated hunting season dates, in addition to

¹ [Sunday Hunting Restrictions](#)

connecting farmers and hunters to properly manage wildlife populations on private property and expand sportsmen and women's access and opportunity for hunting.

Sincerely,

Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation

Delta Waterfowl

Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen & Conservationists

Pheasants Forever/Quail Forever

Roughed Grouse Society

Safari Club International

Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

C.C.:

The Honorable Austin A. Davis, President of the Senate

The Honorable Joanna E. McClinton, Speaker of the House

The Honorable Joe Pittman, Senate Republican Leader

The Honorable Jay Costa, Senate Democrat Leader

The Honorable Matthew D. Bradford, House Democrat Leader

The Honorable Bryan Cutler, House Republican Leader