



To: **Joint Committee on Environment**
Legislative Office Bldg #3200
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: **House Bill 7231 – Sunday Hunting**

Position: **Support**

Date: **March 24, 2025**

Honorable Members of the Connecticut Joint Committee on Environment,

My name is Christian Ragosta, and I am the Assistant Manager, Northeastern States for the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF). I respectfully urge you to vote favorably on House Bill 7231 (H. 7231), to remove the longstanding and antiquated prohibition on Sunday hunting. The passage of such legislation will allow the sportsmen and women of the Constitution State to participate in additional Sunday hunting opportunities and allow Connecticut to join the other states that currently allow more robust Sunday hunting offerings.

Founded in 1989, CSF is the informed authority across outdoor issues and serves as the primary conduit for influencing public policy. Working with the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus (CSC), the Governors Sportsmen's Caucus (GSC), and the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses (NASC), CSF gives a voice to hunters, anglers, recreational shooters, and trappers on Capitol Hill and throughout state capitols advocating on vital outdoor issues that are the backbone of our nation's conservation legacy.

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.

Cultural norms have shifted throughout the years and families now face the reality of working weekends or less traditional hours and being responsible for attendance of extracurricular school activities on weekends. Limiting a hunter's time afield due to familial responsibility should not hinder wildlife management efforts due to a prohibition of the regulated harvesting of wildlife on a Sunday.

In June of 2018, Governor Dan Malloy signed into law the ability for bow hunting to occur on private property with written consent from the property owner and to take place at least 40 yards of a blazed hiking trail.^{1 2} Increasing hunting opportunities on Sundays has provided private property owners and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) increased resources to manage wildlife resources in the state. However, DEEP deserves the flexibility to regulate what other wildlife needs to be effectively managed through the storied use of hunting practices and in what manner and season. Not limiting the use of Sundays as a management tool to only one species and for only one particular season.

The passage of H. 7231 would significantly improve access and opportunity for Connecticut'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 retention of sportsmen and women in the State. Repealing laws restricting hunting on Sundays will likely increase participation, have a positive impact on the state's wildlife management, and will strengthen the Constitution State's outdoor heritage and private property rights.

In closing, CSF respectfully requests that the Committee vote favorably on H. 7231 to remove the antiquated blue law of Sunday hunting restrictions, allowing residents of the State the opportunity to enjoy their longstanding and deep-rooted outdoor heritage when it best suits their schedules within the confines of the regulated hunting season dates.

Sincerely,



Christian Ragosta

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¹ Environmental Quality and Conservation Programs- Public Act No. 18-181 June 14, 2018 State of Connecticut
<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2018/ACT/pa/pdf/2018PA-00181-R00HB-05360-PA.pdf>

² CHAPTER 490 FISHERIES AND GAME- Sec. 26-73 State of Connecticut
https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_490.htm#sec_26-73