



Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs

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Providing leadership and advocacy for the enhancement of our fish and wildlife resources for the benefit of all hunters, trappers, anglers and conservationists. Protecting our 2nd Amendment Rights.

Pennsylvania Senate Game & Fisheries Committee Testimony Regarding the Prohibition on Sunday Hunting in Pennsylvania Wednesday, May 18, 2016

Good morning Chairmen Scavello and Brewster, members of the committee, staff and guests. My name is John Kline. I am the Director of Government Affairs for the Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs. The Federation is one of the oldest and largest organized groups of Pennsylvanians who hunt, fish, trap, defend our second amendment rights and work to preserve and enhance our environment to further these pursuits. Founded in 1932, our organization is made up of sportsmen's clubs, individuals and several organizations that share our views, representing over 70,000 constituents.

The subject of hunting on Sundays has been brought before the legislature in the past. Practical reasons to allow this wholesome and safe Pennsylvania family tradition far outweigh the emotional and non-substantive arguments that continue to keep this prohibition in place. These practical reasons include economic benefit to the commonwealth and its businesses, broadening the conservation and management tool that the Game Commission has in setting seasons and bag limits, but most importantly, removal of the prohibition would allow Pennsylvania families to enjoy this great activity in our current age when time has never been a more valuable resource. Talk to any parent who has to manage school, sports and other activities.

While the Federation's members are split on the matter of what species they would support seeing expanded hunting on Sunday, the majority unequivocally support removing the legislative statutory prohibition and allow the commonwealth agency charged with managing wildlife to do their job. Hunting and trapping on specific dates and during specific times is a seasons and bag limits matter, not a legislative matter. All concerns and opinions on which species could or should be expanded to an extra day of hunting on Sunday's should go through the commission's season and bag limits review process.

Opponents to this change have not shown any reason why this old "blue law" prohibition should stay in place. Private land owners already control who can access their land on any day of the week. While we thoroughly respect when land owners open their properties to hunting and trapping, we must ask why a small band of land owners who already control access to their own land, are given such so much consideration over the control of what others can or cannot do on their own land or on public land such as State Game Land?

A small group opposes the removal of this prohibition for religious reasons. The only response to this position is, hunting is not mandatory. If you want to stay home, stay home. Why is hunting on Sunday any different than fishing on Sunday?

Finally, to those who oppose removal of the prohibition based on fear of killing more deer, or other fears of "change", I leave you with this quote from John F. Kennedy, "Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future." Our youth may miss out on a future hunting heritage if we are not willing to adapt and change.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice our position. I stand ready for any questions.