



# NATIONAL DEER ASSOCIATION

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Delaware Senate Executive Committee  
C/O Senator David L. Wilson  
411 Legislative Ave.  
Dover, DE 19901

31 March 2021

RE: Support for SB16 – Establishing a constitutional right to hunt, fish and trap in Delaware

Dear Senate Executive Committee Members:

On behalf of the National Deer Association (NDA), I am writing to provide our comments of support for Delaware Senate Bill 16, which preserves the right forever to hunt, fish and trap wildlife in Delaware through constitutional amendment. NDA is a national nonprofit wildlife conservation organization dedicated to ensuring the future of wild deer, wildlife habitat and hunting. We represent 30,000 members nationwide and our membership includes hunters, landowners and natural resource professionals.

As the legislation notes, 21 other states have preserved the rights of their citizens to hunt, fish, or trap through constitutional amendments, and SB16 follows specific models passed by Idaho, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, and Tennessee. NDA firmly believes that hunting, fishing and trapping are the most effective and scientifically proven methods for managing and controlling wildlife. Even more, hunting, fishing and trapping have been shown time and time again to be the primary drivers of wildlife conservation throughout North America. Solidifying the right to hunt, fish and trap through constitutional amendment would be of tremendous value to Delaware sportsmen and women, conservationists, wildlife-lovers and the public as a whole.

Fortunately, that value has been quantified by the [United States Fish and Wildlife Service](#) and dedicated conservation organizations, including our partners at the [Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation](#) (CSF) and the [National Shooting Sports Foundation](#) (NSSF). Specifically, hunting generates nearly \$5 billion in retail sales each year in the South Atlantic region, which includes Delaware, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia. Of that sum, about \$3 billion is generated from deer hunting activities alone. The region is home to 1.6 million hunters, of which 1.1 million hunt deer. These hunters spend over 16.6 million combined days per year pursuing game and experiences across Delaware and the South Atlantic region, creating 44,000 jobs and generating nearly \$250 million in state and local tax revenues and over \$400 million in federal tax revenues. These figures do not even include the retail sales, jobs and tax revenues generated by sportfishing and trapping.

Undoubtedly, SB16 permanently preserves the important sporting heritage of Delaware, but it also preserves so much more, including funding for conservation and non-conservation initiatives alike. We respectfully ask the Executive Committee members to join NDA in supporting SB16. With more people turning to hunting, fishing and trapping for food, recreation and relaxation in 2020 and into 2021, passage of this legislation is more important now than ever.

Sincerely,

Torin Miller  
*Director of Policy*