



NATIONAL DEER ASSOCIATION

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Senator Kim Ward
Senate Box 203039
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3039
Room: 292 Main Capitol

2 June, 2021

RE: Support for Senate Bill 431 – Pennsylvania Antlerless Deer Licensing Modernization

Dear Senate Majority Leader:

On behalf of the National Deer Association (NDA), I am writing to provide our comments of support for Pennsylvania Senate Bill 431, which would allow for the sale of antlerless deer hunting licenses through the Pennsylvania Game Commission's (PGC) Pennsylvania Automated Licensing System (PALS). 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.

Currently, Pennsylvania hunters apply for most antlerless deer licenses by sending an application to a county treasurer for processing and issuing. In return for the processing service, the county receives \$1 from each antlerless license sold. This system was designed and implemented many years ago when county lines served as the boundaries for hunting activities and wildlife management. Historically, counties have processed applications at various rates, and hunters had to rely on varying postal delivery times for the delivery of the antlerless application – which provides its own hassles, including a self-addressed, stamped envelope and paper check or money order.

Senate Bill 431 provides that antlerless license shall be issued only by the PGC or by authorized license-issuing agents designated by the director and shall be available through the PALS. The PGC recently updated this system, and the new interface provides hunters a more convenient and efficient way of applying for and receiving hunting licenses. Now, more than ever, the PGC is equipped to handle a transfer of the antlerless deer license application process from counties to the agency, and the PGC fully supports the move.

The NDA supports the modernization of applying for and purchasing deer hunting licenses and permits. In an ever-increasingly digital world, providing a streamlined approach for hunters to engage in the deer management process is incredibly important, and doing so may remove barriers to entry for those unfamiliar with the outdated process. Further, the PGC is a self-funded agency – it doesn't receive any general funding from the state, but rather, it funds its mandates through the sale of hunting licenses. Bringing the sale and processing of antlerless licenses in-house will only advance the conservation of the Commonwealth's game and non-game resources.

Sincerely,

Torin Miller
Director of Policy