



January 27, 2025

To: Representative Anita Astorino Kulik, Chair, House Game & Fisheries Committee
Representative David M. Maloney Jr., Minority Chair, House Game & Fisheries Committee

Re: HB 70 – Proposal to set deer season opener

Dear Chair Kulik and Minority Chair Maloney,

We, the undersigned organizations, representing tens of thousands of hunters, anglers, conservationists, and outdoor enthusiasts across Pennsylvania, are writing to express our opposition to HB 70, a bill that proposes to mandate the opening day of the rifle deer season.

We believe that this proposed legislation contradicts the principles of scientific wildlife management and jeopardizes the Pennsylvania Game Commission's authority to determine hunting rules and regulations (like setting seasons and bag limits) based on the best available science.

The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (the world's preeminent wildlife management system) emphasizes the importance of employing sound scientific principles in wildlife management decisions. It acknowledges that state fish and wildlife agencies that employ professional wildlife managers (like the Pennsylvania Game Commission) are best equipped to make informed and evidence-based decisions regarding hunting regulations. These decisions are appropriately made through the Commission's rulemaking process, often with public input, rather than through statutory changes.

We must trust the Pennsylvania Game Commission to perform the duties it is charged with and manage wildlife resources for current and future generations of Pennsylvanians. Taking this critical authority (season and bag limit setting) away from the Pennsylvania Game Commission will set a dangerous precedent going forward. It will allow decisions that were formerly made objectively by scientific wildlife managers and thrust them into the political arena. Thus, these decisions are and should remain under the regulatory authority of the subject matter experts—the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

We remain opposed to HB 70 and any future legislative attempts to mandate season and bag limits outside the Commission's regulatory process.

Sincerely,

- Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
- Delta Waterfowl
- Ducks Unlimited
- Hunters United for Sunday Hunting
- National Deer Association
- National Wild Turkey Federation
- Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen and Conservationists
- Pheasants Forever/Quail Forever
- Ruffed Grouse Society/American Woodcock Society
- Safari Club International