

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

PA 15-204

HB6034

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Transcripts from the Joint Standing Committee Public
Hearing(s) and/or Senate and House of Representatives
Proceedings

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**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2015**

**VOL.58
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[pause]

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Have all the members voted? If all the members have voted - if all the members have voted, the machine will be locked. Mr. Clerk, be so kind as to announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill 6736

Total Number Voting 144

Necessary for Passage 73

Those voting Yea 142

Those voting Nay 2

Absent and not voting 7

REP. GODFREY (110th):

The bill is passed. [gavel]

Mr. Clerk, Calendar 366, please.

CLERK:

On Page 20, House Calendar 366, Favorable Report of the Joint Standing Committee on the Environment. Substitute House Bill 6034, AN ACT AUTHORIZING BOW AND ARROW HUNTING ON CERTAIN PRIVATE PROPERTIES ON SUNDAY.

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REP. GODFREY (110th):

Distinguished Chair of the Environment
Committee, Representative James Albis.

REP. ALBIS (99th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, good afternoon.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Good afternoon.

REP. ALBIS (99th):

Mr. Speaker, I move acceptance of the Joint
Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the
bill.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Question is on acceptance and passage. Will
you explain the bill please, sir.

REP. ALBIS (99th):

Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,
this bill does precisely what the title indicates,
it allows limited bow and arrow hunting on certain
private property on Sundays during deer hunting
season. The - a - hunter must acquire written
permission from the landowner of the private
property and carry that written permission with
then as they are hunting. So, Mr. Speaker, I would
be happy to answer any questions. Thank you.

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REP. GODFREY (110th):

Thank you, sir. The distinguish Ranking Member of the Environment Committee, Representative Shaban.

REP. SHABAN (135th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand in support of the bill. The Chamber will recall this bill has actually been before us I think twice in the last two or three years and has passed both times with broad support. I think the key thing to focus on is that this bill is not only one of the top priorities with the Department of Environmental Protection, Energy and Environmental Protection, but it's also geared toward deer management practices, which you can see in Section 1 of the bill. So I urge my colleagues to support it as they have in the past. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Thank you, sir. Gentleman from the 117th, Representative Ferraro.

REP. FERRARO (117th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise in strong support of the bill. I think it's a great bill. And it takes care of a need among our recreational

hunters, those that work Monday through Saturday, and only have Sundays available. I think it's a great bill and it ought to pass. And I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the bill. Thank you very much.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Thank you, sir. Gentleman from Greenwich, Representative Camillo.

REP. CAMILLO (151st):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this bill has been before this General Assembly several times now, probably five or six years I think. And depending where you come from in the state, some parts, some regions it's popular, some places it's not so popular. A few questions, through you, to the proponent of the bill.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Proceed, sir.

REP. CAMILLO (151st):

Thank you. This bill usually from the proponents we hear that it's needed for Lyme disease control, overpopulation of deers, and there's an added benefit to the state. It's claimed that there'll be some revenue coming in.

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Through you, to the proponent of the bill. The good gentleman from Environment.

Lyme disease is borne by a lot of different hosts. So if we're, you know, diminishing the deer, how much more of a - how much is this going to deal with the problem of Lyme disease if there are many, many other hosts for the - for this tick? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Representative Albis, do you care to respond?

REP. ALBIS (99th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, through you. I do not know the extent that it will address that issue. Through you.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Representative Camillo.

REP. CAMILLO (151st):

I'm sorry, I didn't hear that. Through you.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Representative Albis.

REP. ALBIS (99th):

Yes, my apologies. Through you, Mr. Speaker, I don't know the extent it will help that issue.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

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Representative Camillo.

REP. CAMILLO (151st):

Okay, thank you. Thank you, gentleman, for that answer. Regarding the overpopulation of deer in the state, I've read so many different studies on this back in both sides of the issue. Somewhere I read recently that Saturday hunting has decreased it by about 1 percent. If that is true, how much will this help being on deciding one more day?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Representative Albis.

REP. ALBIS (99th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, through you. I don't know the exact answer to that question. I would imagine it's somewhere in the same range. Through you.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Representative Camillo.

REP. CAMILLO (151st):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I could not hear that. I was being spoken to by a gentleman in the back. Could gentleman repeat that, please?

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Gentlemen, unfortunately we don't have a sergeant-at-arms right now. I guess that's the way it would go. Representative Albis, one more time.

REP. ALBIS (99th):

No, problem, Mr. Speaker, through you. I don't know the exact answer to that question. But I imagine it's in the same range. Through you.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Representative Camillo.

REP. CAMILLO (151st):

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank the gentleman for that answer. The added revenue that is thought to be coming in, estimated to be coming in through Sunday hunting with an arrow, with a bow on private property is about, I read somewhere, about 40,000 I think in the fiscal note; is that correct? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Representative Albis.

REP. ALBIS (99th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, through you. Yes, that is correct. The fiscal note states it could be less than \$40,000 revenue gain. Through you.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

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Representative Camillo.

REP. CAMILLO (151st):

Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I want to thank the gentleman for his answers on that. I know this bill is - has passed out of Environment overwhelmingly and I anticipate it's going to pass here. But I do know that in certain areas of the state that people are concerned about it and, you know, having six days for hunting and adding a seventh, some don't think it's a big deal, some do. But I do thank the gentleman for his answers. I will be voting no. But, again, thank you.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Thank you, sir. The gentlewoman from the 43rd, Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I know that we have been trying to get this bill done here for quite a while. And I've certainly been one of the ones who has concerns about the bill. And my major concern is for hikers, people who want to go out on weekends and go along our Blue-Blazed trails and enjoy the outdoors, whether it's bird watching,

whether it's watching wildlife, or whether it's just be with their children and hiking.

And I have a particular concern, Mr. Speaker, because I deal with children and rescue horses and they go on my property, which abuts private property. I have a ring that abuts private - other people's private property on three sides. And I never know where those little kids are going to end up once they start gallivanting around on their little rescue ponies.

So I do get a little uptight about the fact that there will be people with bows and arrows on the property right next to where the kids are riding. But through you, Mr. Speaker, I do have a question for the proponent of the bill.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Proceed, ma'am.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. If, perish the thought, one of these deer gets wounded on property next to where the kids are riding around and wanders onto the property where they are, what is protocol on that case? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

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Representative Albis.

REP. ALBIS (99th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, through you. My understanding is that protocol is that the hunter must follow the deer until he is able - he or she is able to capture it. Through you.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Then am I to understand that the hunter would be allowed on my private property when I object to the Sunday hunting? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Representative Albis.

REP. ALBIS (99th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, through you. That is my understanding from discussions I've had. Through you.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. If I put up some really big signs, will that keep them from coming on my property? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

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REP. GODFREY (110th):

Representative Albis.

REP. ALBIS (99th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know. I don't have a good answer for that. Through you.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

I'd like to thank the good gentleman for his responses. And there are very many people who really value recreation and time with their families on Sunday. And I believe that the amount of money that they bring in with buying equipment, whether it's kayaks, whether it's canoes, whether it's backpacks, more than offsets what we will be looking at in - for additional revenue for the Sunday hunting. So for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I will be voting against the bill. Thank you.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Thank you, ma'am. Will you remark further on the bill? Will you remark further on the bill? Gentleman from the 28th, Representative Russ Morin.

REP. MORIN (28th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, maybe I'll end up with a question for the proponent of the bill at some point. But I think I heard him

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say that this was the number one priority of the Department of Environmental and Energy, or whatever we call them now, is that accurate?

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Representative Albis.

REP. ALBIS (99th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, through you. This has been a priority of the department for a number of years. Through you.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Representative Morin.

REP. MORIN (28th):

That's - thank you, I appreciate that answer. I find that very interesting with all the interesting things that we're dealing with with runoff into Long Island Sound, all the various other environmental issues we're dealing with. And this is the top priority for the agency. But I do appreciate the good work they do.

I guess my main concern with this whole bill and the concept is I was reading I guess on a Sunday, you can't hunt within 40 or 45 feet of a blazed trail. Boy, that makes me feel safe if I'm taking a walk out in the woods. I think that

that's problematic for the safety and - of people that want to go out on a Sunday walk with their families. And I think there frankly should be one day a week where we don't have to worry about getting pegged with an arrow.

But I appreciate the good work that the fine Chairman has done. I - as you can tell, I probably will not be voting for this. But I will listen, unless I feel like talking a little more, I will listen with baited breath as we hear more discussions. So I thank you very much for the time, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

You're very welcome, Representative Morin.
Gentleman from the 47th, Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just rise to speak in favor of this bill. It is a very limited bill. It gives people an opportunity who would otherwise not be able to hunt at all to, if they work during the week, to have one day where they're able to on a weekend on their own property or on private property. This is not a widespread bill that - where people are going to be in the state forests

or in other areas.

They're going to be only on private property, only in limited areas of private property in the state, and only hunting with bow and arrow. So I - it's a very limited bill, gives people an opportunity, and I support the bill. Thank you very much.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Thank you, sir. Remark further on the bill? Will you remark further on the bill? If not, staff and guests please come to the Well of the House. Members, take your seats. The machine will be open.

CLERK:

[bell ringing] The House of Representatives is voting by roll. Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll. Members to the Chamber.

[pause]

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Have all the members voted? Have all the members have voted? If all the members have voted,

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the machine will be locked. Clerk will take a tally.

Mr. Clerk, kindly announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill 6034

Total Number Voting 145

Necessary for Passage 73

Those voting Yea 113

Those voting Nay 32

Absent and not voting 6

REP. GODFREY (110th):

The bill has passed. [gavel]

Mr. Clerk, kindly call Calendar 118.

CLERK:

On Page 5, Calendar 118, Favorable Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement. Substitute House Bill No. 6767, AN ACT CONCERNING THE APPROVAL AND AUTHORIZATION OF PRIVATE OCCUPATION SCHOOLS.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

The distinguish Chairwoman of the Higher Education Committee, Representative Willis.

REP. WILLIS (64th):

Thank you very much. Good evening, Mr.

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I'd like to mark a few items go, please.

THE CHAIR:

Please.

SENATOR DUFF:

Thank you, Madam President. On Calendar Page 17, Calendar 604, House Bill 6034 as go. Followed by Calendar Page 5, Calendar 452, House Bill 6725. Followed by Calendar Page 20, Calendar 625 House Bill 6838.

Followed by Calendar Page 13, Calendar 550, House Bill 6283. Followed by Calendar Page 19, Calendar 616, House Bill 6856. And if the Clerk could please call them in that order.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

State of Connecticut Senate Calendar for Wednesday, June 3, 2015. On Page 17, Calendar 604, substitute for House Bill No. 6034, AN ACT AUTHORIZING BOW AND ARROW HUNTING ON CERTAIN PRIVATE PROPERTY ON SUNDAYS. Favorable report of the Committee on Environment.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kennedy. The Senate will stand at ease for a moment.

(Chamber at ease.)

The Senate will come back to order. Senator Kennedy. Good afternoon, sir.

SENATOR KENNEDY:

Good afternoon, Madam President. I rise to make a few brief introductory remarks as Chairman of the Environment Committee before yielding to my good colleague to make a formal motion on this bill. This

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bill is House Bill No. 6034, Sunday bow hunting on private land.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kennedy. Oh, sorry. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF:

Thank you, Madam President. Can we stand at ease for a moment, please?

THE CHAIR:

The Senate will stand at ease. Thank you.

(Chamber at ease.)

THE CHAIR:

The Senate will come back to order. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF:

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, we'll go back to Senator Kennedy, who I think will make a yield. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Senate Kennedy.

SENATOR KENNEDY:

Thank you, Madam President. I would yield my comments to my good colleague, Senator Osten, who will make a formal motion on the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten, will you accept the yield, ma'am?

SENATOR OSTEN:

Thank you very much, Madam President. Madam President, I would be honored to accept the yield. Madam President, I move acceptance of the Joint

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Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill in concurrence with the House of Representatives.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on acceptance and passage in concurrence. Will you remark, ma'am?

SENATOR OSTEN:

Yes, Madam President. Madam President, this is a simple piece of legislation that has been around for a number of years and provides private landowners the ability to hunt on their property using bow on Sundays. And that's quite frankly is the extent of the legislation. It has the support of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the Nature Conservancy, and many other environmental groups.

As most people in the Circle know that having land requires true land management. And true land management is taking care of the land in an appropriate fashion. And this is a step in that direction. And I would appreciate support from my colleagues. Thank you very much, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further on the bill? Will you remark further on the bill? Senator Chapin.

SENATOR CHAPIN:

Thank you, Madam President, and good afternoon.

THE CHAIR:

Good afternoon, sir.

SENATOR CHAPIN:

I rise in support of the bill before us and would first like to thank one of our good leaders of the Sportsmen's Caucus for standing up today in support of the bill and bringing it out. She is correct when she says it's been around a number of years. I've served on the Environment Committee all 15 years. And it's

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probably at least been introduced or asked to be introduced all 15 years. So it's been a long time coming.

I also am appreciative of the latitude given on this particular bill by those in leadership, who may actually cast a red vote when the final vote is taken. And certainly those who've advocated hard on this bill for all those years that I've been in the building are very appreciative of that as well. This is a quite a narrow version. There have been a lot of various versions over the years.

As the good Chairwoman of P&D said, it is limited to private property only with written permission of the landowner. There is a provision for, I think, it's a 40-yard buffer from blue trails. And also, probably most importantly, is it's in those zones - and there are 13 around the state - deer management zones that the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection believes that there's an overpopulation of deer. The Agency has consistently said that this is a mechanism they need to control the deer population.

The optimum number is 20 deer per square mile. I've heard estimates of maybe up to 80 deer per square mile in some of these districts. So I know over those 15 years that this effort has gone on, the deer population has continued to grow. And so the number of districts has also expanded that exceed that optimum level. So I do view this as a recreational opportunity. But more importantly, as a deer management opportunity.

And for those who may oppose, for those constituents who have talked to me specifically with opposition to any sort of deer management such as this, I only have to look back to this past winter and think about how difficult it must have been when there's three feet of snow for deer to actually survive through the winter. So I don't view it as inhumane as maybe some other people in this building do. I think it's the right thing to do. I'm appreciative that we're having the debate on this bill today. And ultimately I look forward to its approval. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

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Will you remark further? Senator Kane, good afternoon, sir.

SENATOR KANE:

Good afternoon, Madam President. I rise in support of the bill and would like to align my comments with those of Senator Chapin. I do have one or two quick questions to the proponent of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Madam President, through you to Senator Osten. The underlying bill says that kind of what Senator Chapin stated about the zones that are overpopulated. And it says that 11 of the 13 zones are overpopulated. Does that mean there are two that this bill will not allow Sunday hunting in? Through you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN:

Through you, Madam President, that would be correct.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

And may I get from the Chair what those two zones are? Through you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN:

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Through you, Madam President. That would be decided by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. And they would be posting set areas on their website. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Madam President, and any time frame for that posting? Through you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN:

I usually start seeing this posted sometime in August before hunting season starts. And that's generally when the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection puts out its information regarding hunting in general. And that will be incorporated into that mechanism.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Madam President. I appreciate the good Chairwoman's answers. And I will be in support of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark further on the bill?
Senator Kissel. Good afternoon.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much. Good afternoon, Madam President, delighted to see you on this afternoon of our last

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official day here for this session. Just a couple questions, through you, to the proponent of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR KISSEL:

When is deer hunting season in Connecticut? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN:

Thank you very much, Madam President. Depends on the type of hunting that you're doing. And there's a fall season and then an early winter - well, what would be early winter season. Through you, Madam President. And I don't have the exact dates memorized. I apologize.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much. And that's good enough of a ballpark. And when's the effective date of this bill?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN:

It would be in July.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

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Of this year? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN:

I believe that would be correct.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

And through you, Madam President. So it's either the fall or the winter. And currently under the laws that we have, is bow hunting part of both of those seasons? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN:

Thank you very much, Madam President. Bow hunting is generally allowed, yes, on both of those time frames. You know, I certainly apologize for not committing to memory all of the dates. But because there is a variety of levels of hunting that happen, pheasant, turkey, all with different start dates. And having done the hunting rules for the Sprague Land Preserve, I just always have to check them every year myself. And I certainly apologize to you, Senator Kissel. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much. Through you, Madam President. I guess the point that I'm trying to get to is we're

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merely adding Sunday, is that correct? Typically if there's a certain period of time that we've allowed bow hunting for deer that what this does is allow one additional day that heretofore had not been allowed but that otherwise bow hunting of deer does take place in Connecticut? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN:

Through you, Madam President. That would be true. And I do need to correct myself. The effective date would be October 1st of this year. And I would say that in my area of the state, where many people hunt for food that they serve at their kitchen table, this is an important mechanism for them to provide food to their families.

Generally speaking, those that are hunting on Sunday are actually feeding their families with the product of that. And we consider it a very important piece and another mechanism for what someone does on their own private property. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much. And I appreciate those answers from the proponent. For those of you who may have served in this Circle in years past, I think I raised this fun fact a couple of times. But when I was growing up, my dad and my brothers were in the YMCA Indian Guides. And although my Native American name was Running Deer, I am supporting this bill wholeheartedly because I do agree with the proponent's concerns about overpopulation, especially my good friend and colleague, Senator Chapin. And I want to appreciate the efforts of Senator Osten and Senator Kennedy.

I just think that this is a humane way to address

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increased population. Bow hunting has been a part of the heritage of New England for many, many centuries. And, indeed, in comparing putting food on someone's table versus allowing an overpopulated area of deer to go through a harsh winter, where there might be starvation, to me, unbalanced, even if one is a proponent of care for animals and may not personally believe in hunting, I think on balance, I'd rather have people put food on their table or use this as sportsmen and women to go out there and enjoy the great outdoors as opposed to having these beautiful, wild creatures perhaps face harsh winters and starvation and other turmoil.

So on balance, I think this is a - is a good step. And I know the sportsmen and women in North Central Connecticut will be appreciative of this proposal as well. And I'm happy to stand in support. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark? Senator Cassano.

SENATOR CASSANO:

Good morning and thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Good afternoon, Senator Cassano.

SENATOR CASSANO:

It's an honor to follow Running Deer. I rise in speak in support of the amendment. I did Chair Plan and Development. This bill had been before us a few times. I can't tell you how many times that people expressed the fact that they work six days a week that if they could hunt on Sunday legally, that is food on the table. That's important.

But even more important to me personally, we're forgetting one of the reasons for doing this and that's Lyme disease. In fact, we have a bill downstairs right now recognizing Lyme disease, a month, a national month to deal with Lyme disease. So

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just we had a forum a couple weeks ago on Lyme disease, which comes from the deer tick.

My son has both babesiosis and Lyme disease, babesiosis being the extreme of Lyme disease. My brother has been suffering for years from Lyme disease from deer ticks. There is a reason to reduce that population. It is a very painful, painful affliction. And so I clearly support the bill because it's one way to deal with this situation. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark further on the bill? Will you remark further on the bill? If not, Mr. Clerk, I call for an open roll call vote. And the machine will be open.

CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.

[pause]

THE CHAIR:

If have all members voted, if all members have voted, the machine will be closed. Mr. Clerk, will you call the tally, please.

CLERK:

House Bill No. 6034

Total Number Voting	36
Necessary for Passage	19
Those voting Yea	28
Those voting Nay	8
Absent/not voting	0

THE CHAIR:

The bill passes. [gavel] Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: