



SB 1041 (Hueso) - Deer Hound Hunting

Summary

This bill seeks to end the practice of deer hound hunting in California, which pertains to the coursing of deer with a pack of hounds, or an individual hound dog.

Background

The number of hunters who chase deer with hounds has been decreasing for generations. In 2012, then Governor Brown signed SB 1221 (Lieu), outlawing the use of hounds when hunting bears and bobcats. While this legislation took great strides in stopping inhumane and outdated hunting tactics, we still fall behind most other states in outlawing this practice entirely. California still allows hound hunting, along with nine contiguous southern states and Hawaii.

The practice of deer hound hunting is neither fair chase nor ethical. Both bucks and does may run faster than dogs, but only during the initial moments of the chase. Because deer lack the lung capacity of dogs, exhausted deer may be cornered, caught, attacked and mauled before the handlers can arrive on scene. Moreover, if a deer finds a way to avoid or escape the hounds, they may needlessly succumb to capture myopathy.¹

Before hounds pick up a deer's scent, they are often released to roam in surrounding wildlife habitat. This directly and indirectly impacts non-targeted wildlife in the local ecosystem as the hounds may cause disturbances in the form of harassment and predation which can often lead to abandonment of young and changes in the migratory patterns.

There are no agency fees imposed to train or use dogs to hunt deer, so there will be no loss of revenue to the CA Dept of Fish and Wildlife by banning the use of dogs to hunt deer.

Why this bill is needed?

California Fish and Game code requires that dogs be kept under control at all times [CA FG Code 3008], however this may not always be possible as hounds often range miles from their respective handlers. Whether its game or non-game, targeted or not, all wildlife species and their habitats are egregiously stressed by hounds running loose.

With skill and stealth, ethical hunters who abide by fair chase principles – and hunting deer without dogs – will not be affected by a deer hound hunting ban.

This bill will seek to end the outdated practice of deer hound hunting, aligning California's hunting standards with those of 39 other states. With the advancement of technology in the hunting sector, the use of hounds creates fair chase and ethical concerns. It not only adversely impacts deer and surrounding wildlife, but also subjects hounds to risks -- all while giving hunters themselves an unfair advantage.

Support

Social Compassion in Legislation (Sponsor)

Opposition

No opposition received

Staff Contact

Dylan Jaff

Legislative Aide

Dylan.Jaff@sen.ca.gov

Capitol Office: (916) 651 – 4040

¹ <https://www.pgc.pa.gov/Wildlife/Wildlife-RelatedDiseases/Pages/CaptureMyopathy.aspx>