



To: Speaker Ronald Mariano

State House
24 Beacon St.
Room 356
Boston, MA 02133

Re: House Docket 4607 – An Act Modernizing Firearms Laws

Position: Oppose

Date: October 13, 2023

Honorable Speaker and Honorable Members of the Massachusetts House of Representatives:

We, the undersigned organizations who represent the interests of hundreds of thousands of sportsmen and women across the Bay State, write to you in strong opposition to Massachusetts House Docket 4607 (HD 4607) – legislation that proposes to unnecessarily overhaul the state’s firearms laws and implement restrictions that will be extremely prohibitive to the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife’s (MassWildlife) management and conservation funding, Recruiting, Retention, and Reactivation (R3) efforts within the sporting community, and may eliminate access to private lands in the Commonwealth.

Massachusetts’ sportsmen and women, including recreational shooters, have been the primary funders of state level conservation for more than 85 years. Through the American System of Conservation Funding, hunting license fees go directly back into conservation by the State to protect lands, waters, and habitats important to Massachusetts’s wildlife. Also, the Pittman-Robertson Act of 1937 dedicated a manufacturer-level excise tax on firearms and ammunition that contributes millions of dollars each year directly into state conservation efforts. A similar program exists on the fishing side through the Dingell-Johnson/Wallop-Breaux Acts (DJ-WB). Massachusetts’s hunters and recreational shooters are proud to contribute to these funds when

purchasing our firearms and licenses. Last year alone, MassWildlife received over \$24 million dollars through Pittman-Robertson allocations, and when combined with hunting and fishing license sales and DJ-WB apportionments, results in around 57% of MassWildlife's budget being comprised of sportsmen-generated dollars. Unfortunately, HD 4607, if passed, would threaten a significant portion of this funding that supports the state's habitats and wildlife populations—something that all Bay Staters should care about. HD 4607 would put the 3:1 federal match with license fees in jeopardy.

The expensive and exhaustive requirements and prohibitions of HD 4607 create significant barriers to entry for youth and families hunting in Massachusetts. This will very likely result in fewer new hunters enjoying this outdoor family activity and will diminish the positive impacts that hunting has on Massachusetts's natural habitats. We share the interests of promoting safe firearm ownership and we hope you will work closely with our community to find positive opportunities to do so without diminishing the recruitment and retention of hunters and recreational shooters in the Bay State that are vital for the future of conservation funding in our state. As you move forward on firearms-related bills, please feel free to contact us through Fred Bird with Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, fbird@congressionalsportsmen.org.

Sincerely,

Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Dallas Safari Club
Houston Safari Club
National Deer Association
National Trappers Association
National Wild Turkey Federation
Ruffed Grouse Society/ American Woodcock Society
Safari Club International