

## Senator Corman Senator for a Day Sunday Hunting Reference Articles:



### Bill For Sunday Hunting To Be Introduced In Pennsylvania

State Rep. Frank Farina, D-Lackawanna, announces he will introduce bill to allow Sunday hunting in Pennsylvania.

Barbara Miller | [bmiller@pennlive.com](mailto:bmiller@pennlive.com) By Barbara Miller | [bmiller@pennlive.com](mailto:bmiller@pennlive.com)

on June 16, 2015 at 12:24 PM, updated June 17, 2015 at 11:54 AM

Pennsylvania hunters would finally be able to hunt on up to a dozen Sundays if legislation being introduced by two state representatives passes.

State Rep. Frank Farina, D-Lackawanna, and Rep. Robert Godshall, R-Montgomery Tuesday announced they will introduce legislation to allow the Pennsylvania Game Commission to authorize eight to 12 Sundays of hunting in Pennsylvania, which is one of 11 states that now restricts it.

"Times have changed, our schedules and our lives have changed. It's time the outdated laws in Pennsylvania change as well," said Farina in the Capitol Rotunda Tuesday morning.

"This is our land, and we should be allowed to enjoy the sport we love on our land, when we want," he said, adding that hunting fees have helped fund the purchase of 1.5 million acres of public lands.

Godshall said the state eliminated the "blue law" on fishing in 1937, and he sponsored a bill 20 years ago that allowed Sunday hunting on private regulated shooting grounds. "If you're a regular guy on the street, you still don't hunt on Sundays," Godshall said.

Pennsylvania has a decades old ban on most Sunday hunting for large and small game. Still, feral swine, crows, foxes and coyotes may be hunted on Sundays and farmers at any time may kill deer and elk that are damaging their crops or property.

The change comes at a time when the state budget could use the estimated \$800 million that Farina said Sunday hunting could add to the economy, along with 7,000 jobs.

People now go to church on Saturday, and can gamble and buy alcohol on Sundays, said Farina, who chairs the Pennsylvania Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus.

Another supporter is Rep. William Kortz, D-Allegheny County, who said he often couldn't hunt on the first day of deer season due to his long hours working in a steel mill.

"I have talked to naysayers - the trail walkers, bird watchers, and we had a nice conversation... There can be compromise here and both sides can have what they need," Kortz said.

"It used to be you couldn't buy gas on Sunday. We couldn't buy a pair of shoes on Sunday. You could buy food and that was it," said Steve Mohr of Unified Sportsmen of PA. "What we have to realize is everyone doesn't have a five-day-a-week job anymore," he said.

"I hear the opponents - I hear where they're coming from. But I too am a farmer. And under the present rules and regulations I can't even enjoy my own land on a Sunday," Mohr said.

The hunting blue law "is antiquated, it is discriminatory, and it is a major barrier from families having time afield" in their busy lives, said Janet Nyce, chairwoman of Hunting Works for Pa., based in Perry County.

It would be up to the Pennsylvania Game Commission to enact regulations, and there would be several comment periods, she said.

Here are some hunting stats cited by Nyce:

- The economic ripple from hunting totals \$1.6 billion.
- The average hunter spends \$1,260 per year.
- Hunting supports 15,000 jobs.
- \$986 million is spent by hunters each year.
- Hunting provides \$529 million in salaries.
- \$121 million is generated in state and local taxes from hunting, and \$136 million in federal taxes.

Between work, school and other obligations, Sunday hunting bans work to discourage hunting at a time when participation needs to be promoted to preserve the hunting heritage, said Rebecca Louviere, NRA spokeswoman.

The state has 1.5 million hunters, but only 950,000 licenses were purchased last year. Farina said Sunday hunting could expand those numbers, and help promote hunting with the younger generation of hunters.

"Let's get the 1.5 million hunters back into the Pennsylvania woods. Give us eight to 12 Sundays and let's get these youngsters back into the Pennsylvania woods.

Among those not supporting the change is the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, Farina said, due to concerns over trespassing.

In June 2014, the Sunday hunting movement was dealt a setback when a federal judge shot down a lawsuit a sportsmen's group filed challenging the constitutionality of the state's ban on most Sunday hunting.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission in 2010 passed a resolution supporting legislation that would give the Game Commission the authority to make decisions on Sunday hunting. A 2011 legislative study found that Sunday hunting would generate more than \$800 million in economic activity statewide.

State Game Lands total nearly 1.5 million acres, there are an additional 2.2 million acres of private land open to public hunting, state and national forests account for about 2.5 million acres, said Travis Lau, Game Commission spokesman.

[http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2015/06/bill\\_would\\_end\\_ban\\_on\\_sunday\\_h.html](http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2015/06/bill_would_end_ban_on_sunday_h.html)