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Testimony In Opposition

LD 27, An Act To Allow the Use of Crossbows During the Archery Season on Deer

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

Presented by David Trahan, Executive Director of the SAM Institute for Legislative Action

January 30, 2019

The honorable Senator Dill, Representative Nadeau, members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee, my name is David Trahan, I am the Executive Director of the SAM Institute for Legislative Action and I am testifying in opposition to LD 27, An Act to Allow the Use of Crossbows During the Archery Season on Deer.

This is a perennial bill that continues to come before this committee, we have opposed it in the past because this policy will undoubtedly lead to unintended consequences. First, traditional archers and cross bow hunters will be in direct conflict and we have no interest in creating seasons where sportsmen and women are fighting against each other. Secondly, given the major advances in crossbow technology, scopes and trigger devices that improve accuracy, it is logical to assume if this bill passed, many more hunters would participate in this season and certainly, harvest more deer.

Right now, archers have a September season, October season and crossbows are allowed for the disabled and seniors the rest of the deer season. Firearm hunters are starting to push back, the Whitetail deer herd should be managed first, for sustainability statewide. Any new opportunity to harvest a deer should be fair to firearm hunters, particularly, those that don't receive a doe permit. Technology like crossbows is forcing all of us to examine whether all hunters have equal access to the resource. This bill will lead to more animals harvested during October and less chances for the traditional firearm hunter. For that reason and many others, we cannot support this bill.

Below are a couple web sites to learn more about cross bows.

Effective Hunting Range

If using a 300+ FPS crossbow, the average effective hunting range is 50, maybe 60 yards. You can obviously go beyond that – even an 80-yard shot would still be powerful enough to kill medium and even big game. The real question here is whether you can land the shot with perfect precision and penetrate the vital organ(s); most people can't do so with consistency. Which is why most crossbow hunters will prefer to take a shot from a maximum of 35 yards away; not because their arrow won't kill from a further distance, but because they want to be certain the arrow will land where it should, otherwise they'd end up wounding the animal only without killing it, and that's not something any ethical hunter wants. <http://www.bestcrossbows.com/how-far-can-you-shoot-a-crossbow/>

Considering the factors!

Many factors play a role in determining the accuracy of any weapons trajectory. Being an ex-Army soldier I know you have to adjust for wind, distance of the target, weight of the actual object your firing, the quality of your scope and the person who will be firing the weapon. In this case we are looking at Crossbows.

Accuracy Test Performed

There was a test done by the owner of Velocitip and it seems you can definitely fire a crossbow over a 100-yard range with awesome accuracy. He determined that the distance would cause a 10 foot or more drop in the arrow and took about 1 second to get to the target. This test was done with a 417 grain arrow and a bowtech 360.

So we see that this is possible and moreover very good results. That a 100-yard shot hit its target with deadly accuracy. This was also done under testing conditions but would definitely be able to be performed by a seasoned shooter. There are multiple factors to account for on an individual basis and I would be hard pressed to say that it would be worth a shot during an actual hunting season. However, the advancements in technology and the better the equipment gets, this may become the norm and afford greater game hunting opportunity. <http://www.crossbowlife.com/accurate-crossbow-100-yards/>