



QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Hon. Edward G. Staback
225 Irvis Office Building
PO Box 202115
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2115

Dear Mr. Staback,

On behalf of the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA) and the Pennsylvania State Chapter we are writing to state our support for House Bill 13 which would limit the liability for landowners allowing recreation on their properties. The QDMA is a national nonprofit wildlife conservation organization dedicated to ethical hunting, sound deer management and preservation of the deer-hunting heritage. The QDMA has nearly 45,000 members nationwide, including more than 2,500 of the nation's leading wildlife and forestry professionals. As such, QDMA is widely regarded as the most respected whitetail organization in the United States.

Hunters play an important role in Pennsylvania's societal and economic well being. Hunters provide a free ecological service to society by managing deer and other wildlife populations and provide more than \$1.5 billion annually to Pennsylvania's economy. Unfortunately the number of hunters in Pennsylvania is decreasing. Currently, Pennsylvania only recruits 62 hunters for every 100 it loses, and this is nearly 10% below the national average. One suggested reason for this decline is lack of suitable places to hunt.

As homes, highways and shopping malls replace wildlife habitat, wildlife and hunters are forced onto smaller and/or fewer habitat parcels. In addition, many urban and suburban landowners unfamiliar with hunting and its benefits, purchase property in rural areas and do not provide access to hunters. Some of these landowners disapprove of hunting while others are merely concerned about the liability of having people on their property. These situations create barriers for hunters and fewer hunters negatively impact Pennsylvania's wildlife management programs.

Safety is paramount to the future of hunting. Fortunately, research clearly shows hunting is safe. American Sports Data, Inc. conducted an extensive study in 2002 that examined more than 100 sports and activities. Twenty eight activities, including cheerleading and aerobics, had higher injury rates than hunting. Hunting is safe and landowners should be "safe" from liability issues while allowing recreational access to their properties. For these reasons the QDMA urges you to support House Bill 13. Thank you for your time and your commitment to Pennsylvania's natural resources.

Respectfully,

Kip P. Adams
Director of Education & Outreach / Wildlife Biologist

Steve Trupe
President, PA State Chapter QDMA

*The QDMA is dedicated to ethical hunting, sound deer management
and the preservation of the deer-hunting heritage.*
