



# NRA-ILA

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA  
INSTITUTE FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION  
11250 WAPLES MILL ROAD  
FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA 22030-7400

January 15, 2009

Pennsylvania Game Commission  
Commission Members  
2001 Elmerton Avenue  
Harrisburg, PA 17110

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to express the National Rifle Association's strong support for the pending proposal that would make Pennsylvania the twelfth state to allow the use of crossbows during the state archery season. The NRA advocates for any expansion of hunter opportunity and choice where there is no biological reason to oppose the expansion. Preserving and strengthening our cherished hunting heritage depends on it.

Experience in other states proves that allowing the unqualified use of crossbows helps to retain and recruit hunters. At a time when hunter numbers are declining, nothing is more important. Retention of older hunters with diminished physical capabilities is especially critical. These hunters remaining in the field years longer than they otherwise would if restricted to vertical bows encourages them to recruit more friends and family.

According to the National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife Associated Recreation, only 62 new hunters are recruited to the field in Pennsylvania for every 100 who permanently leave it (a hunter replacement ratio of 0.62). The Commission is to be commended for its many recent efforts to improve this alarming ratio and this crossbow proposal is one more logical step in that laudable endeavor.

Contrary to the claims of opponents, the experience in other states shows that archer success rates do not increase with the use of a crossbow as opposed to a vertical bow. The goal of all hunters should be to increase participation because greater hunter numbers in the future will bolster defenses against the political attacks initiated by anti-hunting extremists like the Humane Society of the United States. There is no legitimate place for the brand of hunter elitism that pits one hunter group against another.

Thank you for exercising the courage and foresight to bring this proposal forward. Hunters for generations to come will owe you a debt of gratitude. Please contact me at (703) 267-1207 if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,

Daren LaSorte  
NRA-ILA Manager of Hunting Policy