



Uniting Citizens to Conserve, Protect and Enhance Michigan's Natural Resources and Outdoor Heritage
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September 29, 2022

Governor Gretchen Whitmer
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Honorable Governor Gretchen Whitmer,

Yesterday, the Michigan Senate passed a House-amended version of House Bill 6354. Both bodies chose to play politics with Michigan's natural resources rather than passing good policy.

[HB 6354](#), which would have decriminalized failure to report a deer harvest by reducing penalties from a misdemeanor and possible jail time to a civil infraction, was unanimously approved as introduced by the House Government Operations Committee.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) and the Michigan State Advisory Council of the National Deer Association indicated their support, and there was no opposition.

Only five hours later, HB 6354 was amended on through a voice vote on the House floor with many members of the body, public or stakeholder groups not having an opportunity to read the amendment. The following week, the Senate discharged the bill from committee immediately and approved it with the House amendment.

The bill now removes the Natural Resource Commission's (NRC) authority to require reporting of a deer harvest — an authority MUCC believes should remain as part of the seven-member, bipartisan body's duty. Their charge is to use science-based management, and they are uniquely equipped to better dive into natural resources issues than the legislature.

MUCC was founded in 1937 under the belief that politics should not play a role in managing our natural resources. While the commission's decision-making process may sometimes be less than perfect, it provides some level of insulation from political whims and is far superior to allowing wildlife management to occur by popular vote.

While Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) remains neutral on the implementation of mandatory deer harvest reporting, we have and will continue to adamantly oppose attempts by the legislature to subvert the politically-insulated commission process solidified in state law through [Proposal G of 1996](#) and expanded by the 2014 Scientific Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act.

Instead of taking the opportunity to fix a problem for the outdoor community, with a bill fully supported by the administration and stakeholders, the choice was made in the House of Representatives to play a game of politics and now hunters could be left to suffer the consequences. The Michigan Senate had the opportunity to correct this course of action and amend the bill to the language as originally introduced.

Ultimately, both chambers could have passed out a bill that decriminalized not reporting a deer harvest. They chose not to.

We urge you not to tie the hands of the NRC and veto this bill. MUCC, its 40,000-plus members, conservationists, hunters, trappers and shooters ask for your support.

Sincerely,



Amy Trotter, Executive Director

Cc: Kara Cook, Senior Advisor on Energy and Environment, Office of the Governor
Daniel Eichinger, DNR Director