



The Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus

The Sportsmen's Best Friend in Annapolis

March 12, 2009

HONORABLE MARTIN O'MALLEY
Governor, State of Maryland

HONORABLE MEMBERS
Maryland General Assembly

SPORTSMEN'S COMMUNITY OF MARYLAND

Attached is a document from the bi-partisan Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus entitled, *Maryland's Conservation Law Enforcement Dilemma: Perspective*. The intent is to echo the concerns expressed today by Maryland's 1 million sportsmen who feel aggrieved by a perceived lack of conservation law enforcement from a 3-fold standpoint: (1) Declining Law Enforcement Personnel; (2) Lack of Enforcement Tools; and (3) A Purported Complacent Judiciary.

Our statement does not call for spending millions of additional taxpayer dollars nor does it allege purposeful wrong doing by specific individuals. Instead, it attempts to reflect a prevailing and pervasive attitude that warrants serious consideration – strengthened enforcement of Maryland's fisheries and wildlife laws – culminating in a planned Conservation Law Enforcement Summit in Fall 2009. The envisioned outcome would be a call to action from a policy-related perspective beginning with the 2010 Session of the Maryland General Assembly.

As America's "First" conservationists and a group which contributes in excess of one billion dollars annually to Maryland's economy, sportsmen represent the first line of defense when it comes to upholding and underwriting our natural resources laws. They are intolerant to those who deliberately and willfully violate the very laws they helped persuade lawmakers to enact. As President Theodore Roosevelt once said, "Wildlife cannot speak for itself...so we must and we will." And, our trusted colleagues, that is exactly why you are reading this statement.

Please share with us any related thoughts, ideas and suggestions as we move forward together to develop a 21st Century Conservation Law Enforcement Strategy worthy of national emulation.

Senator John C. Astle
Senate Co-Chair

Delegate Wendell Beitzel
House Co-Chair