



**House  
Legislative  
Analysis  
Section**

Washington Square Building, Suite 1025  
Lansing, Michigan 48909  
Phone: 517/373-6466

**BOW HUNTING ON SUNDAY IN SANILAC COUNTY**

House Bill 4103 as introduced  
First Analysis (2-21-89)

**RECEIVED**

APR 17 1989

Sponsor: Rep. Keith Muxlow

Committee: Tourism, Fisheries and Wildlife

Mich. State Law Library

***THE APPARENT PROBLEM:***

In 1929 the legislature passed a local act prohibiting hunting on Sundays in Sanilac County in order to preserve the county's ring-neck pheasant population. Reportedly during the 1930's, large numbers of Detroit workers often traveled north to hunt pheasants on Sunday, the workers' only day off, often resulting in a commotion of barking dogs and gunfire in the area on a day most preferred to have quiet. Today, although the pheasant population in the area (and in the rest of the state) has decreased substantially, the area's deer population has exploded resulting in crop damage to farmer's fields and a dramatic increase in car-deer accidents in the county. (The Sanilac County Sheriff's Department recorded 352 car-deer accidents between the months of January and October last year, and, reportedly, over 125 occurred in the month of November last year.) Although most residents still would like to keep the first day of the week free from gun blasts or the baying of dogs, some feel bow hunting should be allowed on Sundays. They feel bow hunters could help reduce the deer population in the county, but, because of the techniques used in bow hunting, would not make noise while doing so. Also, because bow-hunting on Sundays is allowed in most other counties, some feel Sanilac should follow suit.

***THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:***

The bill would amend Local Act 4 of 1929 to allow bow and arrow hunting on Sunday in Sanilac County. The bill would provide for a referendum to ratify the amendment, to be submitted to the voters of Sanilac County at the next general election. If approved by the voters, the bill would take effect ten days after certification of the election results.

Note: Article IV, section 29 of the state constitution provides that "no local or special act shall take effect until approved by two-thirds of the members elected to and serving in each house and by a majority of the electors voting thereon in the district affected."

***FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:***

According to the Department of Natural Resources, the bill would have no fiscal implications for the state. (2-16-89)

***ARGUMENTS:***

***For:***

The bill simply would permit hunters in Sanilac county the opportunity to hunt wild game, primarily deer, with a bow and arrow on Sundays. Area farmers have seen an increase in crop damage caused by hungry deer, while increased car-deer accidents have frustrated area residents (and insurance companies). Although bow hunters probably would not harvest enough deer in the area to ease the situation, they still could help reduce deer numbers in the area. (Reportedly, the DNR issued additional "antlerless doe permits" to gun hunters in the

area to more effectively reduce the deer herd.) In addition, bow hunters are typically quiet and unobtrusive (they have to be to get close enough to shoot their quarry), and would not offend those in the area who want Sundays quiet and free from the commotion of gunfire and barking dogs.

***POSITIONS:***

The Department of Natural Resources supports the bill. (2-16-89)

The Sanilac County Board of Commissioners supports the bill. (2-16-89)

The Sanilac Bowmen support the bill. (2-16-89)

The Midthumb Bowmen support the bill. (2-16-89)

H.B. 4103 (2-21-89)