

**SFA**

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Fiscal Agency

• Lansing, Michigan 48909

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House Bill 4103 (as reported without amendment)

Sponsor: Representative Keith Muxlow

House Committee: Tourism, Fisheries, and Wildlife

Senate Committee: Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs

Date Completed: 3-3-89

**RATIONALE**

In 1929, the Legislature passed a local act to prohibit hunting on Sundays in Sanilac County. Around that time, large numbers of Detroit workers often traveled north to hunt pheasants on Sunday, their only day off work, frequently resulting in a commotion of barking dogs and gunfire in the area on a day when many residents preferred to have peace and quiet. Reportedly, the local act was passed to stem such activity and to preserve the county's ring-neck pheasant population. Today, although the pheasant population in the area (and all across the State) has decreased substantially, the area's deer population has exploded resulting in crop damage to farmers' 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.) Reportedly, although most residents still would like to keep the first day of the week free from gun blasts and dog barking, some feel that bow hunting should be permitted on Sundays. They contend that bow hunters could help control the deer population in the county, and, because of the techniques used in bow hunting, would not make noise while doing so.

**CONTENT**

The bill would amend Local Act 4 of 1929 to allow hunting for game, other than with firearms or dogs, on Sunday in Sanilac County. Currently, the Act forbids hunting on Sundays in that county.

The bill provides for its submittal to a vote of the electors of Sanilac County at the next general election after the bill's passage. The results of the vote would have to be canvassed by the Board of State Canvassers. If the referendum were approved by a majority of voters, the bill would become effective 10 days after the certification of the election results.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government since the referendum would be scheduled during a general election.

**ARGUMENTS****Supporting Argument**

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, and increased car-deer accidents have frustrated area residents (as well as insurance companies). Although bow hunters probably would not harvest enough deer in the area to ease the situation substantially, they still could help to reduce the deer population there. (Reportedly, the Department of Natural Resources issued additional "antlerless doe permits" to gun hunters in order to reduce the deer herd more effectively.) In addition, bow hunters typically are quiet and unobtrusive, and would not offend those who would like to keep Sundays

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quiet and free from the commotion of gunfire  
and barking dogs.

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