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HOUSE BILL NO. 124

Offered January 12, 2022

Prefiled January 7, 2022

A BILL to amend and reenact § 29.1-519 of the Code of Virginia, relating to hunting deer; use of .22 caliber rifle authorized.

Patrons—Wyatt, Cherry and Wiley

Referred to Committee on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 29.1-519 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:****§ 29.1-519. Guns, pistols, revolvers, etc., which may be used; penalty.**

A. All wild birds and wild animals may be hunted with the following weapons unless shooting is expressly prohibited:

1. A shotgun or muzzleloading shotgun not larger than 10 gauge;

2. An automatic-loading or hand-operated repeating shotgun capable of holding not more than three shells the magazine of which has been cut off or plugged with a one-piece filler incapable of removal through the loading end, so as to reduce the capacity of the gun to not more than three shells at one time in the magazine and chamber combined, unless otherwise allowed by Board regulations;

3. A rifle, a muzzleloading rifle, or an air rifle;

4. A bow and arrow;

5. [Expired.]

6. A crossbow, which is a type of bow and arrow, in accordance with the provisions of § 29.1-306;

7. A slingshot, except when hunting deer, bear, elk, or turkey;

8. An arrowgun, which is a pneumatic-powered air gun that fires an arrow; and

9. A slingbow, which is a type of bow and arrow, in accordance with the provisions of § 29.1-306 except when hunting bear or elk.

B. A pistol, muzzleloading pistol, or revolver may be used to hunt nuisance species of birds and animals.

C. In the counties west of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and counties east of the Blue Ridge where rifles of a caliber larger than .22 caliber may be used for hunting wild birds and animals, game birds and animals may be hunted with pistols or revolvers firing cartridges rated in manufacturers' tables at 350 foot pounds of energy or greater and under the same restrictions and conditions as apply to rifles, provided that no cartridge shall be used with a bullet of less than .23 caliber. In no event shall pistols or revolvers firing cartridges rated in manufacturers' tables at 350 foot pounds of energy or greater be used if rifles of a caliber larger than .22 caliber are not authorized for hunting purposes.

D. The use of muzzleloading pistols and .22 caliber rimfire handguns is permitted for hunting small game where .22 caliber rifles are permitted.

E. The use of muzzleloading pistols of .45 caliber or larger is permitted for hunting big game where and in those seasons when the use of muzzleloading rifles is permitted. The Board may adopt regulations that specify the types of muzzleloading pistols and the projectiles and propellants that shall be permitted.

F. *The use of rifles equipped with .22 caliber centerfire ammunition are permitted for hunting big game.*

G. The hunting of wild birds and wild animals with fully automatic firearms, defined as a machine gun in § 18.2-288, is prohibited.

H. The hunting of wild birds or wild animals with (i) weapons other than those authorized by this section or (ii) weapons that have been prohibited by this section is punishable as a Class 3 misdemeanor.

INTRODUCED

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