

VETOES

Titles and Messages

Senate Bill No. 4

AN ACT concerning

Hunting - Use of Lead Shot

FOR the purpose of prohibiting the promulgation of any rule or regulation which bans or limits the use or possession of lead shot ammunition while hunting wild waterfowl; making this prohibition apply notwithstanding the pertinent federal regulations; prohibiting the State from undertaking certain actions; and generally relating to the use or possession of lead shot.

May 29, 1979

Honorable James Clark, Jr.
President of the Senate
State House
Annapolis, Maryland 21404

Dear Mr. President:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, I have today vetoed Senate Bill 4.

This bill would prohibit the promulgation of any administrative rule or regulation which bans or limits the use or possession of lead shot ammunition while hunting wild waterfowl; would make the prohibition applicable notwithstanding pertinent federal regulations; and would prohibit the State and its agencies from enforcing any ban or limit on the use or possession of lead shot ammunition.

The "lead shot" controversy has been with us over the course of the last several years. It presents a difficult issue for decision, and any action I take with respect to this measure is not likely to lessen the dispute. Nevertheless, after careful deliberation and consideration of the arguments presented by both the proponents and opponents of this measure, I have concluded that there is abundant and compelling scientific evidence that the ingestion of spent lead shot pellets is responsible for the annual lead poisoning of hundreds of thousands of bottom feeding waterfowl. I also find convincing evidence that steel shot is an effective and efficient alternative to lead shot. Finally, in the face of the Declaration of Rights' solemn declaration that the Constitution of the United States and the Laws made in pursuance thereof are the