

annual economic loss in excess of approximately \$33 million which is considered a conservative estimate because it does not include damage to fruits, vegetables, and other crops; and

WHEREAS, Nonlethal control mechanisms, such as fencing, fertility control, repellents, relocation, deterrent reflectors along roadways, and behavior modification by the installation of lights, have proven largely ineffective because they cannot be used routinely and inexpensively and moreover, they impact only a small number of deer; and

WHEREAS, Extended research has shown that hunting is the most effective method to reduce the size of the deer herd, and it is likewise the most cost-effective method to do so; and

WHEREAS, Since the annual revenue associated with deer hunting in Maryland is approximately \$156 million, hunters provide a significant boost to local economies, and their license fees also cover all associated program costs; and

WHEREAS, The increased harvest of deer by hunting is thus necessary for the public interest and to stabilize the deer population and manage it more appropriately; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

#### **Article - Natural Resources**

10-405.

(a) (1) Pursuant to § 10-205 of this title, the Department shall establish by regulation and publish by July 1 each year the open season[, excepting Sundays,] to hunt [the] forest and upland game birds and mammals.

(2) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED UNDER ~~§§ 10-410 AND 10-415~~ § 10-410 OF THIS SUBTITLE, THE DEPARTMENT MAY NOT AUTHORIZE HUNTING ON A SUNDAY.

10-410.

(a) (1) Except as provided in [paragraph (2)] PARAGRAPHS (2) AND (3) of this subsection, a person may not hunt any game bird or mammal on Sundays.

(2) The following persons may hunt the specified game birds and mammals on Sundays:

(i) A person using State certified raptors to hunt game birds or mammals during open season;

(ii) An unarmed person participating in an organized fox chase to chase foxes; and

(iii) Provided that the provisions of § 10-906(b)(3) of this title are met, a person: