

# SENATE ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### SENATE, No. 335

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 15, 2021

The Senate Environment and Energy Committee favorably reports Senate Bill No. 335.

The bill would amend and supplement laws pertaining to hunting. In particular, the bill would: (1) expand the laws relating to hunting to control animals that damage crops; (2) clarify the law pertaining to deer baiting; and (3) establish a uniform procedure by which monetary donations can be made by hunters to the non-profit organization Hunters Helping the Hungry.

The bill would allow the Division of Fish and Wildlife in the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to authorize a land owner or lessee, or the authorized agent thereof, through the issuance of a permit, to engage in deer depredation control activities on forested land that is the subject of a forest stewardship plan, forest management plan, or woodland management plan. The bill would authorize the Division of Fish and Wildlife to require the owner or lessee of land under cultivation to provide evidence that deer damage has occurred on the land under cultivation within the preceding 12 months; and the owner or lessee of forested land to submit evidence from a forester that the nature and extent of deer damage within the preceding 12 months interferes with the goals of the woodland management plan, forest management plan, or forest stewardship plan.

The bill would require the Division of Fish and Wildlife to establish a multi-species depredation permit which would allow an owner or lessee of land, a portion of which is under cultivation, or their authorized agents, to kill an animal of a species listed in the permit which is on the land and known to cause crop damage.

The bill would also establish within the State's "hunters' and anglers' license fund," a special account to be known as the "Hunters Helping the Hungry Fund." Hunters Helping the Hungry (HHH) is a nonprofit organization that works with regional food banks to provide hungry State residents with nutritious, high-protein venison meat, which has been donated to the organization by deer hunters.

The bill would require the Division of Fish and Wildlife, on each new application or renewal application for a recreational hunting license, depredation control permit, or special deer management permit, or on any other hunting or fishing license or permit issued thereby, to provide the applicant with the opportunity to indicate thereon, using a check-off style format, that the applicant wishes an

enclosed monetary contribution to be donated to the “Hunters Helping the Hungry Fund.”

The bill would provide that any costs incurred by the DEP for the collection of funds or the administration of the donation program may be deducted from the receipts obtained from donations. However, the bill would require the remaining moneys to be deposited into the “Hunters Helping the Hungry Fund” and annually appropriated by the Legislature to the DEP, for distribution to HHH or to another nonprofit organization which, as determined by the DEP, has a substantially similar purpose and mission. The bill would require those distributed funds to be used by HHH or by such other, similarly purposed, nonprofit organization, for the purposes of administering, maintaining, facilitating, and expanding the venison donation program.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2020-2021 session pending technical review. The bill includes changes required by technical review, which has been performed.