

MBA LEGISLATIVE “UPDATED” ALERT!!!!!!!

Written January 21st, 2010 & current through January 25th.

BOTH HB1137 & HB1282 PASSED THE HOUSE WILDLIFE FISHERIES & PARKS COMMITTEE 1/21/2010

With the speed of a passing bullet (pun intended) lawmakers on the House Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks committee voted to pass the curtailment and shortening of the Mississippi archery season! In the very first committee meeting, lawmakers convened and passed both anti-bowhunting bills on the very first occasion. What this means is that both bills will have a full House vote very soon.

Let's quickly recap where we stand:

HB1137- This bill (as passed in Committee today) would have the potential to create an October 1 gun opener on 1.6 million acres of DMAP (Deer Management Assistance Program) properties in Mississippi. A club or landowner under the DMAP program would request authorization from the MDWFP to take antlerless deer with any weapon (gun) starting on October 1 and the MDWFP would review the request for approval. The great concern of this program is that clubs & landowners would rush to be on the early gun opener program... and create a demand for a four month season statewide. We saw years ago “doe permits” being used to entice clubs on the DMAP program and eventually the doe harvest program was allowed statewide. Also how does enforcement know the antlerless deer is taken on DMAP and not some other place? How can it be enforced to apply only to DMAP? What about temptation for firearm users when that big buck walks by in October? These are issues that we don't have answers for.

HB1282- This bill (as passed in Committee today) will outright close the archery only season on October 31! Can you imagine loosing up to 19 days of archery only in the very best time of the year with a bow & arrow?(!) Given that this bill would also end all December & January primitive weapon seasons, the net effect would create four more weeks of modern gun season without even considering the archery season loss. If the 19 extra PW days are added in November (at the expense of archery only), this will leave three full months of ‘bang’ season with only four weekends of archery only. One of those weekends could potentially be youth firearm, leaving Mississippi bowhunters with only THREE weekends that the hunter doesn't have to wear the handsome blaze orange attire. How does that sound? Does it sound fair? I don't think so.

SB2922- (This bill has not been taken up by the Senate Wildlife committee yet) This crossbow bill was filed by Senate Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks Chairman, Tommy Gollott (601-359-2220). Sen. Gollott's bill is simple. It allows the crossbow to be used in any open deer or turkey season. While the MBA supports the crossbow for the elderly and the disabled, we do not feel that it's legalization for the archery season is in the best interest of the sport. The sport we all enjoy is open to all hunters with a bow for the mere cost of a license. 66 national, state, provincial and national bowhunting organizations oppose its use in archery only season formats. Please call Senator Gollott & the wildlife

committee members and express your concerns over this bill. The provided links shows all the individual lawmakers committee assignments so look for the ones in the Senate that say 'Wildlife.'

So here's what I would like to respectfully ask each of you to do. For bills **HB1137** & **HB1282**; we need to call EVERY **HOUSE** legislator...especially the one that lives closest to you. The links will show the counties they represent & where they live.

With your help we can turn the tide. Please pass this email on to every concerned sportsman that hunts with bow & arrow!

All House members link for HB1137 & HB1282
http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/members/h_roster.pdf

All Senate members link for the crossbow bill SB2922
http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/members/s_roster.pdf