



General Assembly

**Amendment**

January Session, 2025

LCO No. 8673



Offered by:

REP. PARKER, 101<sup>st</sup> Dist.

REP. CALLAHAN, 108<sup>th</sup> Dist.

REP. MUSHINSKY, 85<sup>th</sup> Dist.

SEN. LOPES, 6<sup>th</sup> Dist.

SEN. HARDING, 30<sup>th</sup> Dist.

To: Subst. House Bill No. 7231

File No. 724

Cal. No. 455

**"AN ACT CONCERNING SUNDAY HUNTING ON PRIVATE LANDS  
OF TEN ACRES OR MORE."**

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and substitute the  
2 following in lieu thereof:

3 "Section 1. Section 26-3 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
4 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

5 The Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection shall  
6 enforce all of the laws relating to fish and wildlife of the state and shall  
7 possess all powers necessary to fulfill the duties prescribed by law with  
8 respect thereto and to bring actions in the proper courts of this state for  
9 the enforcement of such laws and the orders and regulations adopted  
10 and promulgated by said commissioner. Said commissioner shall have  
11 the supervision of hatcheries and retaining ponds and of the

12 introduction, propagation, securing and distribution of such fish and  
13 wildlife as are adapted to the waters or lands of this state, and may  
14 designate, as closed to fishing, areas of inland waters to provide for  
15 spawning beds. The commissioner may take at any time or place, [other  
16 than Sundays,] using any method consistent with professional wildlife  
17 management principles, any fish, crustacean, bird or animal for  
18 scientific and educational purposes, public health and safety,  
19 propagation and dissemination, or protection of natural or agricultural  
20 ecosystems. Such taking shall not include the use of a snare. In the case  
21 of an imminent threat to public health or public safety, notwithstanding  
22 any provision of the general statutes, the commissioner may take at any  
23 time or place, using any method consistent with professional wildlife  
24 management principles, any fish, crustacean, bird or animal. Said  
25 commissioner shall have jurisdiction of all matters relating to fish and  
26 wildlife on any land belonging to the state and the regulation of hunting,  
27 fishing and trapping and the use of the waters of any lake, pond or  
28 stream on such land. The commissioner shall not grant to any  
29 conservation officer, appointee or other person any special privileges  
30 with respect to hunting, fishing, trapping or the use of the waters of any  
31 lake, pond or stream on such land. Said commissioner may erect  
32 buildings upon any such land, subject to the permission of the  
33 authorities of any institution or commission controlling such land and  
34 the approval of the Commissioner of Administrative Services and the  
35 State Properties Review Board. The Commissioner of Energy and  
36 Environmental Protection may employ such special assistants as  
37 necessary. Said commissioner shall cooperate with the United States  
38 Fish and Wildlife Service and the fish and wildlife commissioners of  
39 other states. Said commissioner may acquire, by gift or lease and, with  
40 the approval of the Governor alone, by purchase, lands for the  
41 establishment of fish hatcheries or game preserves and fisheries or  
42 wildlife management areas. Said commissioner may, with the approval  
43 of the Attorney General, grant rights-of-way or other easements or  
44 leases for public purposes to the United States government, any  
45 subdivision of the state or any public utility within the state on or with  
46 respect to any lands under jurisdiction of said commissioner if said

47 commissioner finds that such purposes are not in conflict with the  
48 public interest, provided any such public utility shall pay for any right-  
49 of-way, easement or lease so granted such compensation as said  
50 commissioner considers reasonable. Said commissioner shall have  
51 authority to establish the boundaries of any properties under the  
52 jurisdiction of said commissioner by agreement with owners of  
53 adjoining property and may, with the approval of the Attorney General  
54 alone, exchange land with such property owners and execute deeds in  
55 the name of the state for the purpose of establishing such boundaries.  
56 The commissioner may provide for the importation of fish and wildlife,  
57 and provide for the protection, propagation and distribution of such  
58 imported or native fish and wildlife. The commissioner may locate, lay  
59 out, construct and maintain nurseries and rearing ponds where fish may  
60 be planted, propagated and reared and liberate and distribute such fish  
61 in the waters of this state. Said commissioner may acquire by gift,  
62 purchase, capture or otherwise any fish or wildlife for propagation,  
63 experimental or scientific purposes. Notwithstanding any provisions of  
64 the general statutes, said commissioner may destroy and dispose of any  
65 undesirable or diseased wildlife in the interest of wildlife management  
66 at any time or place and using any method consistent with professional  
67 wildlife management principles if said commissioner determines that  
68 such wildlife (1) aggressively invades, or is likely to be detrimental to,  
69 agricultural crops, native plants, livestock or wildlife, (2) is likely to be  
70 a carrier of insects, disease or parasites detrimental to such crops, plants  
71 or wildlife, (3) is likely to have a detrimental effect on natural or  
72 agricultural ecosystems, (4) is likely to be detrimental to endangered or  
73 threatened species or species of special concern, as listed in the  
74 regulations adopted by the commissioner under this chapter, or such  
75 species' essential habitats, or (5) causes severe property damage. The  
76 commissioner may enter into cooperative agreements with educational  
77 institutions and state, federal or other agencies to promote wildlife  
78 research and to train personnel for wildlife management, information,  
79 distribution and education projects, and may enter into cooperative  
80 agreements with federal agencies, municipalities, corporations,  
81 organized groups or landowners, associations and individuals for the

82 development of fish or wildlife management and demonstration  
83 projects. The commissioner may allocate and expend for the protection,  
84 restoration, preservation and propagation of fish and wildlife all funds  
85 of the state collected, appropriated and acquired for the purpose.

86 Sec. 2. Section 26-73 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
87 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

88 Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter, Sunday shall be a  
89 closed season except for hunting [deer with bow and arrow] on private  
90 property and for the purpose of trapping under the provisions of this  
91 chapter. Sunday shall be a closed season for the hunting of migratory  
92 birds. The possession in the open air on Sunday of any implement for  
93 hunting [, except for bow and arrow,] shall be prima facie evidence of  
94 hunting. [in violation of the provisions of this section.] No provision of  
95 this section shall be construed so as to affect any provision of section 26-  
96 31, 26-48, 26-52 or 27-35. Artificially propagated birds designated by the  
97 commissioner may be shot on Sundays on licensed private shooting  
98 preserves subject to such regulations of the commissioner as may apply  
99 to such private shooting preserves, provided permission so to shoot has  
100 been obtained from the town or towns within which such licensed  
101 private shooting preserves are located. Any person who hunts [deer on  
102 Sunday with bow and arrow] on private property pursuant to this  
103 section shall: (1) Have the written permission of the private property  
104 owner where such hunting is conducted, and (2) carry such written  
105 permission upon his or her person during the hunting. No person shall  
106 hunt [with bow and arrow] on Sunday on private property pursuant to  
107 this section within forty yards of a blazed [hiking] trail open to the  
108 public, including, but not limited to, Connecticut blue blazed trails and  
109 federally designated and regulated trails.

110 Sec. 3. Subsection (a) of section 26-82 of the general statutes is  
111 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*  
112 *1, 2025*):

113 (a) No person shall hunt, pursue, wound or kill any deer or sell or

114 offer for sale or have in possession the flesh of any deer captured or  
115 killed in this state, or have in possession the flesh of any deer from any  
116 other state or country unless it is properly tagged as required by such  
117 state or country except as provided by the terms of this chapter or  
118 regulations adopted pursuant thereto, and except that any landowner  
119 or primary lessee of land owned by such landowner or the husband or  
120 wife or any lineal descendant of such landowner or lessee or any  
121 designated agent of such landowner or lessee may kill deer with a  
122 shotgun, rifle or bow and arrow provided a damage permit has first  
123 been obtained from the commissioner and such person has not been  
124 convicted for any violation of this section, section 26-85, 26-86a, as  
125 amended by this act, 26-86b or 26-90 or subsection (b) of section 26-86a-  
126 2 of the regulations of Connecticut state agencies within three years  
127 preceding the date of application. Upon the receipt of an application, on  
128 forms provided by the commissioner and containing such information  
129 as said commissioner may require, from any landowner who has or  
130 whose primary lessee has an actual or potential gross annual income of  
131 twenty-five hundred dollars or more from the commercial cultivated  
132 production of grain, forage, fruit, vegetables, flowers, ornamental plants  
133 or Christmas trees and who is experiencing an actual or potential loss of  
134 income because of severe damage by deer, the commissioner shall issue  
135 not more than six damage permits without fee to such landowner or the  
136 primary lessee of such landowner, or the wife, husband, lineal  
137 descendant or designated agent of such landowner or lessee. The  
138 application shall be notarized and signed by all landowners or by the  
139 landowner or a lessee to whom a farmer tax exemption permit has been  
140 issued pursuant to subdivision (63) of section 12-412. Such damage  
141 permit shall be valid through October thirty-first of the year in which it  
142 is issued and may specify the hunting implement or shot size or both  
143 which shall be used to take such deer. The commissioner may at any  
144 time revoke such permit for violation of any provision of this section or  
145 for violation of any regulation pursuant thereto or upon the request of  
146 the applicant. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 26-85, the  
147 commissioner may issue a permit to any landowner or primary lessee  
148 of land owned by such landowner or the husband or wife or any lineal

149 descendant of such landowner or lessee and to not more than three  
150 designated agents of such landowner or lessee to use a jacklight for the  
151 purpose of taking deer when it is shown, to the satisfaction of the  
152 commissioner, that such deer are causing damage which cannot be  
153 reduced during the daylight hours between sunrise and one-half hour  
154 after sunset on the land of such landowner. The commissioner may  
155 require notification as specified on such permit prior to its use. Any deer  
156 killed in accordance with the provisions of this section shall be the  
157 property of the owner of the land upon which the same has been killed,  
158 but shall not be sold, bartered, traded or offered for sale, and the person  
159 who kills any such deer shall tag and report each deer killed, as  
160 provided in section 26-86b. Upon receipt of the report required by  
161 section 26-86b, the commissioner shall issue an additional damage  
162 permit to the person making such report. Any deer killed otherwise than  
163 under the conditions provided for in this chapter or regulations adopted  
164 pursuant thereto shall remain the property of the state and may be  
165 disposed of by the commissioner at the commissioner's discretion to any  
166 state institution or may be sold and the proceeds of such sale shall be  
167 remitted to the State Treasurer, who shall apply the same to the General  
168 Fund, and no person, except the commissioner, shall retail, sell or offer  
169 for sale the whole or any part of any such deer. No person shall be a  
170 designated agent of more than one landowner or primary lessee in any  
171 calendar year. No person shall make, set or use any trap, snare, salt lick,  
172 bait or other device for the purpose of taking, injuring or killing any  
173 deer, except that deer may be taken over an attractant in areas  
174 designated by the commissioner. For the purposes of this section, an  
175 attractant means any natural or artificial substance placed, exposed,  
176 deposited, distributed or scattered that is used to attract, entice or lure  
177 deer to a specific location including, but not limited to, salt, chemicals  
178 or minerals, including their residues or any natural or artificial food,  
179 hay, grain, fruit or nuts. The commissioner may authorize any  
180 municipality, homeowner association or nonprofit land-holding  
181 organization approved by the commissioner under the provisions of  
182 this section to take deer at any time [, other than Sundays,] or place using  
183 any method consistent with professional wildlife management

184 principles when a severe nuisance or ecological damage can be  
185 demonstrated to the satisfaction of the commissioner. Any such  
186 municipality, homeowner association or nonprofit land-holding  
187 organization shall submit to the commissioner, for the commissioner's  
188 review and approval, a plan that describes the extent and degree of the  
189 nuisance or ecological damage and the proposed methods of taking.  
190 Prior to the implementation of any such approved plan, the  
191 municipality, homeowner association or nonprofit land-holding  
192 organization shall provide notice of such plan to any abutting  
193 landowners of such place where the plan will be implemented. Such  
194 plan shall not authorize the use of a snare. No person shall hunt, pursue  
195 or kill deer being pursued by any dog, whether or not such dog is owned  
196 or controlled by such person, except that no person shall be guilty of a  
197 violation under this section when such a deer is struck by a motor  
198 vehicle operated by such person. No person shall use or allow any dog  
199 in such person's charge to hunt, pursue or kill deer. No permit shall be  
200 issued when in the opinion of the commissioner the public safety may  
201 be jeopardized.

202 Sec. 4. Subsection (a) of section 26-86a of the general statutes is  
203 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*  
204 *1, 2025*):

205 (a) The commissioner shall establish by regulation adopted in  
206 accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 standards for deer  
207 management, and methods, regulated areas, bag limits, seasons and  
208 permit eligibility for hunting deer with bow and arrow, muzzleloader  
209 and shotgun, except that no such hunting shall be permitted on Sunday  
210 [by any means other than with bow and arrow on private property]  
211 unless it is conducted on private lands pursuant to section 26-73, as  
212 amended by this act. No person shall hunt, pursue, wound or kill deer  
213 with a firearm without first obtaining a deer permit from the  
214 commissioner in addition to the license required by section 26-27.  
215 Application for such permit shall be made on forms furnished by the  
216 commissioner and containing such information as he may require. Such

217 permit shall be of a design prescribed by the commissioner, shall contain  
218 such information and conditions as the commissioner may require, and  
219 may be revoked for violation of any provision of this chapter or  
220 regulations adopted pursuant thereto. As used in this section,  
221 "muzzleloader" means a rifle or shotgun of at least forty-five caliber,  
222 incapable of firing a self-contained cartridge, which uses powder, a  
223 projectile, including, but not limited to, a standard round ball, mini-  
224 balls, maxi-balls and Sabot bullets, and wadding loaded separately at  
225 the muzzle end, and "rifle" means a long gun the projectile of which is  
226 six millimeters or larger in diameter. The fee for a firearms permit shall  
227 be nineteen dollars for residents of the state and sixty-eight dollars for  
228 nonresidents, except that any nonresident who is an active full-time  
229 member of the armed forces, as defined in section 27-103, may purchase  
230 a firearms permit for the same fee as is charged a resident of the state.  
231 The commissioner shall issue, without fee, a private land deer permit to  
232 the owner of ten or more acres of private land and the husband or wife,  
233 parent, grandparent, sibling and any lineal descendant of such owner,  
234 provided no such owner, husband or wife, parent, grandparent, sibling  
235 or lineal descendant shall be issued more than one such permit per  
236 season. Such permit shall allow the use of a rifle, shotgun, muzzleloader  
237 or bow and arrow on such land from November first to December thirty-  
238 first, inclusive. Deer may be so hunted at such times and in such areas  
239 of such state-owned land as are designated by the Commissioner of  
240 Energy and Environmental Protection and on privately owned land  
241 with the signed consent of the landowner, on forms furnished by the  
242 department, and such signed consent shall be carried by any person  
243 when so hunting on private land. The owner of ten acres or more of  
244 private land may allow the use of a rifle to hunt deer on such land  
245 during the shotgun season. The commissioner shall determine, by  
246 regulation, the number of consent forms issued for any regulated area  
247 established by said commissioner. The commissioner shall provide for  
248 a fair and equitable random method for the selection of successful  
249 applicants who may obtain shotgun and muzzleloader permits for  
250 hunting deer on state lands. Any person whose name appears on more  
251 than one application for a shotgun permit or more than one application



252 for a muzzleloader permit shall be disqualified from the selection  
 253 process for such permit. No person shall hunt, pursue, wound or kill  
 254 deer with a bow and arrow without first obtaining a bow and arrow  
 255 permit pursuant to section 26-86c. "Bow and arrow", as used in this  
 256 section and in section 26-86c, means a bow with a draw weight of not  
 257 less than forty pounds. The arrowhead shall have two or more blades  
 258 and may not be less than seven-eighths of an inch at the widest point.  
 259 No person shall carry firearms of any kind while hunting with a bow  
 260 and arrow under this section and section 26-86c.

261 Sec. 5. Subsection (b) of section 26-91 of the general statutes is  
 262 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*  
 263 *1, 2025*):

264 (b) The Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection may  
 265 authorize any municipality, homeowner association or nonprofit land-  
 266 holding organization approved by the commissioner under the  
 267 provisions of this section to take resident Canada geese at any time [,  
 268 other than Sundays,] or place using any method consistent with  
 269 professional wildlife management principles. Any such municipality,  
 270 homeowner association or nonprofit land-holding organization shall  
 271 submit to the commissioner, for the commissioner's review and  
 272 approval, a plan that describes the extent and degree of the nuisance or  
 273 ecological damage and the proposed method of taking. Such plan shall  
 274 include prohibitions against feeding of such geese and requirements  
 275 that landscaping in the area is managed in a way to be less hospitable to  
 276 geese, utilizing native plantings. Prior to the implementation of such  
 277 plan, the municipality, homeowner association or nonprofit land-  
 278 holding organization shall provide notice of such plan to abutting  
 279 landowners of such place where the plan will be implemented. Such  
 280 plan shall not authorize the use of a snare."

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2025	26-3

Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	26-73
Sec. 3	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	26-82(a)
Sec. 4	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	26-86a(a)
Sec. 5	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	26-91(b)