



## ***THE FEDERATED SPORTSMEN'S CLUBS OF ULSTER COUNTY***

Mailing: PO Box 3134, Kingston, NY 12402

Physical: 710 Springtown Road, New Paltz

[www.fscuc.org](http://www.fscuc.org) - <https://www.facebook.com/fscuc.org/>

July 14, 2023

We have recently become aware of proposed legislation in bills A2917/S4099.

We are writing to inform you of our opposition, and ask for your assistance in pausing in the passage to allow a specific consideration.

As you may know the bills are proposed with the stated purpose to: "Makes contests, competitions, tournaments and derbys to take wildlife unlawful."

NYS Senate Bill: <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2023/S4099>

NYS Assembly Bill: <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2023/A2917>

The Federated Sportsmen's Clubs of Ulster County is an organization comprised of 32 independent member organizations whose member roles at last census total in excess of 4,900 individual members. These individual members are NY residents most of whom reside Ulster County, with a small number living in surrounding counties. We are prepared to circulate a petition supporting the following position if required.

Our organization opposes the bills for the following reasons:

1-We have not seen or encouraged the abhorrent behaviors of wastefulness that have been alleged as rationale for the passage of these bills.

2-The contests/tournaments/derby's encourage participation within the rules and laws that have been established by NYS in conjunction with DEC's population management programs. While the events may encourage additional participation in taking of wildlife... All contests encourage taking of wildlife which is game, and no contest has pushed any species passed any management objectives put in place by DEC.

3-Benefits Eliminated. These bans eliminate tourism & local economic benefit, tax revenue they generate & will eliminate at least some benefit to DEC & NYS biologists population control objectives. At a minimum more coyotes, means more predators. There needs to be allowance for incentives to keep specific populations in check. In communities like Tupper Lake, fishing derby's draw as many as 1,000 contestants... That community relies on that mid-winter economic boost, but this ban completely kill these events creating meaningful and unnecessary economic loss.

4-Any depletion of species has been accounted for within management plans in place by DEC and are supported by replenishment efforts which come from funding which is generated by license sales. Through license fees, hunters pay into the Conservation Fund, which is the largest pool of money that supports the conservation of lands and wildlife. The Conservation Fund has been tapped for many uses that have questionable connection to improving habitat and wildlife populations.

5-There is no need to completely close the door and lose the opportunity for benefit. The bills specifically carve out contests for Deer, Bear, and Turkey. We think at a minimum there should be an additional carve out that leaves room for contests by permit issued by DEC. The State could then be aware of and monitor



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contests to ensure practices are all sustainable and respectful. And it could play an important role providing opportunity for DEC to meet population management objectives issuing permits for specific location and timelines in the event of over-population, nuisance, or other concerns. Permitting could require registration for organizers and/or individuals, with harsh penalties for poor sportsmanship/wastefulness. And it could enable local municipalities to regain the economic benefit these bills would destroy.

We are aware that the bills have been passed by both houses of the NYS Legislature and have been delivered to the Governor. At this time, only a signature by the Governor is required to enact the bills into law. That action will place the effective date at the first of November that immediately follows the enactment. So this is a timely concern.

We understand it is a long shot at this point to have the bills sent back for a chance to hear our concerns and suggestions. However, we feel there is enough loss involved with these bans, that we ask that the bill goes back to allow the Environmental Committees to review these concerns. Then it is possible to formulate different language that will provide a much better policy serving all the stakeholder concerns, maximizing benefit of healthy population management, and minimizing economic and recreational loss.

We're happy to work with any office/agency to help craft a better solution than this blanket ban with carveouts for 3 species that don't typically generate contests anyway. Please let us know if that is the case.

Additionally, we respectfully request a response stating your position, your reaction to our request, and links to any relevant research or statements of fact that support the bills, which we may not be aware of.

Thank You,

*Ray Valk*

Ray Valk

President – Federated Sportsmen's Clubs of Ulster County

[President@FSCUC.com](mailto:President@FSCUC.com) – 845.549.3964

### **DELIVERED VIA EMAIL TO:**

#### **LEGISLATIVE / AGENCY**

NYS Governor Kathy Hochul  
NYS Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins  
NYS Assembly Majority Leader Carl Heastie  
NYS Senate Minority Leader Robert Ort  
NYS Assembly Minority Leader William Barclay  
NYS Senators Hinchey, Oberacker, Stec, Kennedy  
NYS Assembly, Jacobson, Maher, Shrestha, Tague, Glick  
DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos  
NYS CFAB Chair Jason Kemper Chair  
NYS FWMaB Chair & Exec Committee Bill Conners  
Ulster County Exec Jenn Metzger

#### **ADVOCACY ORGS**

NYSCC President Charles Parker  
NYSRPA President Tom King  
NYSFA Chairman Thomas Gowan  
SCOPE President Tom Reynolds  
FSCUC President Ray Valk  
FSCUC Recording Secretary & Board  
NWTF-NY Reg Dir Sean Langevin  
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BHA-NY President Brian Bird  
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