



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

Matthew J. Strickler
Secretary of Natural Resources

Ryan J. Brown
Executive Director

December 26, 2019

The Honorable J. Chapman Petersen
Senate of Virginia
Chair, Senate Agriculture, Conservation and
Natural Resources Committee
P. O. Box 1066
Fairfax, VA 22038

Dear Senator Petersen:

I am reporting to you as required in the Acts of Assembly 830 of 2019, in regards to HB 2252, carried by Delegate Chris Head during the 2019 General Assembly session. This bill would allow a landowner whose property spans two or more localities to elect to have the firearms ordinances of the locality in which the largest portion of the contiguous parcel of land lies to apply to anyone hunting on any portion of the property (regardless of which locality that portion of the property lies within), provided they notify the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries of that election.

In studying the potential impacts of this legislation, I had Department GIS personnel develop maps of 5 different areas of the state (enclosed), which encompassed a representative cross-section of counties in central, south central, southeastern, northeastern, and southwestern Virginia. The GIS data was obtained from county and municipal land records to show both the boundaries between counties and localities and the parcels that crossed those boundaries. As you can see from the GIS maps, virtually every county and local boundary has a significant number of parcels that cross locality boundaries.

The very large numbers of potentially-affected properties would pose some management challenges. Our law enforcement personnel, as well as local law enforcement, would need to track which local ordinance a landowner had chosen in order to determine how to enforce a potential violation. Localities may also have some concern, in that the relatively large number of parcels involved could lead to circumvention of their local ordinances on significant acreage within their boundaries. Of course, whether or not to pass such legislation lies within the judgment of the General Assembly and our agency stands ready to implement any legislation that is passed to the best of our abilities.

I or my staff would be happy to provide any further information that would be helpful to you in considering this topic, or to address any questions that you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "RJ Brown".

Ryan J. Brown
Executive Director

C: The Honorable Chris Head



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December 26, 2019

The Honorable Kenneth R. Plum
Virginia House of Delegates
Chair, House Agriculture, Chesapeake, and
Natural Resources Committee
2073 Cobblestone Lane
Reston, VA 20191

Dear Delegate Plum:

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Ryan J. Brown
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RJB/

C: The Honorable Chris Head