

By: Senator(s) Turner-Ford (By Request)

To: Wildlife, Fisheries and
Parks

SENATE BILL NO. 2501

1 AN ACT TO PROHIBIT USING DOGS FOR HUNTING DEER; TO AMEND
2 SECTIONS 49-7-31 AND 49-7-37, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, IN
3 CONFORMITY TO THE PRECEDING PROVISION; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

5 **SECTION 1.** (1) It is unlawful to hunt or kill deer with
6 dogs.

7 (2) A violation of this section shall be punishable as a
8 Class I violation as defined in Section 49-7-141.

9 **SECTION 2.** Section 49-7-31, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
10 amended as follows:

11 49-7-31. (1) The open season on deer shall be as follows:

12 (a) With bow and arrow: October 1 through the Friday
13 prior to Thanksgiving.

14 (b) With guns * * *: from the Saturday prior to
15 Thanksgiving through December 1, and from December 16 through a
16 date fixed by the commission that will provide a total of
17 thirty-nine (39) days of hunting deer with guns.



18 (c) With primitive weapons * * *: December 2 through
19 December 15.

20 * * *

21 (* * *d) The commission shall establish an extended
22 season with primitive weapons and bow and arrow without dogs from
23 February 1 through February 15 for the area south of U.S. Highway
24 84 and east of Mississippi Highway 35 only for legal bucks. Any
25 antlered deer taken in this area during any open season under this
26 section must be a legal buck as defined in this paragraph. For
27 purposes of this paragraph, the term "legal buck" means a deer
28 with antlers of four (4) points or more with a minimum inside
29 spread of ten (10) inches or a minimum main beam length of
30 thirteen (13) inches. The commission may regulate the taking of
31 deer with antlers of four (4) points or less under this paragraph
32 for the proper management of antlered deer. The commission may
33 delay the opening date and change the length of bow and arrow
34 season in paragraph (a) in this area.

35 * * *

36 (* * *e) When the open season on deer ends on a
37 Friday, the commission shall have the authority to extend the
38 season until thirty (30) minutes after sunset on the following
39 Sunday.

40 (2) The commission may set and regulate the deer seasons on
41 wildlife management areas which it administers.



42 (3) (a) The commission may allow the harvesting of
43 antlerless deer in the districts or zones upon the recommendation
44 of the executive director based upon good and substantial
45 quantitative data and research evaluations that demonstrate that
46 the harvesting is necessary to properly manage the herd.

47 (b) The commission, only upon the recommendation of the
48 executive director, may allow the harvesting of antlerless deer
49 during the deer season with guns * * * by a majority vote of the
50 commission.

51 (c) Nothing in this subsection prohibits the harvesting
52 of either-sex deer by landowners or leaseholders on private lands
53 under the deer management assistance program prescribed or
54 approved by the executive director.

55 (4) The commission may provide a special permit for the
56 harvesting of deer when they are depredating and destroying crops.
57 The department shall supervise the harvesting and provide for the
58 salvaging of the meat of the animals. The commission may
59 authorize the department to assist any farmer in this state, who
60 sustains crop damage by wildlife, in eradication of the problem
61 wildlife.

62 (5) (a) During any open season on deer with primitive
63 weapons after November 30, a person may use any legal weapon of
64 choice on private lands only, if the person is:

65 (i) The title owner of the land;

66 (ii) The lessee of the hunting rights on the land;



67 (iii) A member of a hunting club leasing the
68 hunting rights on the land; or

69 (iv) A guest of a person specified in subparagraph
70 (i), (ii) or (iii).

71 (b) If the person is required to have a hunting
72 license, the person must have a primitive weapon license,
73 Sportsman's License or a Lifetime Sportsman's License.

74 **SECTION 3.** Section 49-7-37, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
75 amended as follows:

76 49-7-37. (1) Any resident of this state licensed to hunt or
77 otherwise take any legal game bird or game animal in this state by
78 or with the use of firearms, may hunt, kill, shoot or otherwise
79 take game animals or game birds by the use of falcons or hawks as
80 may be prescribed by the commission and in compliance with federal
81 guidelines.

82 (2) The commission may extend the special archery seasons on
83 any public hunting projects, game refuges or prescribed areas
84 having surplus deer populations.

85 (3) The killing by primitive firearms of an antlerless deer
86 or any other deer protected during the regular deer season is
87 prohibited, but the commission may designate areas of the state in
88 which the killing of antlerless deer may be permitted or limited.

89 (4) The commission may make reasonable rules and regulations
90 concerning the special seasons with falcons and hawks, bow and
91 arrow and primitive firearms which it deems necessary and proper.



92 The commission shall define the term "primitive firearm" for
93 purposes of this section and other law or regulation.

94 * * *

95 (* * *5) In addition to a hunting license allowing the
96 taking of deer, any resident desiring to hunt deer with bow and
97 arrow or primitive firearm during primitive weapon or archery
98 season or special hunts established by the commission shall
99 purchase a special resident archery and/or primitive firearms
100 license at a fee of Fourteen Dollars (\$14.00) for each license
101 plus the fee provided in Section 49-7-17.

102 (* * *6) Any person violating this section is guilty of a
103 Class II violation and shall be punished as provided in Section
104 49-7-143.

105 (* * *7) All seasons provided for herein shall begin on
106 Saturday.

107 **SECTION 4.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
108 and after July 1, 2022.

