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As the Massachusetts Conservation Alliance continues to advocate for changes to the state's archery hunting laws as a way of controlling the state's rapidly increasing deer herd, we are excited to see two proposals included in Governor Baker's fiscal year 2023 budget.

The first is an update to existing setbacks, allowing bow hunting within 250 feet of a dwelling. We believe that this measure is crucially needed, as opening more land to sportsmen and sportswomen throughout the Commonwealth will help alleviate the dangerously high deer population. This is especially true in southeastern and northeastern Massachusetts, where wildlife biologists pinpoint the highest density of deer.

The second important proposed change is the inclusion of Sunday bow hunting for whitetail deer. Again, given the elevated deer population and the public safety concern that presents Massachusetts residents, this is a crucial step in the continual conservation of our lands.

The Mass Conservation Alliance, which advocates for the state's 250,000 sportsmen and women, underscores the importance of these steps which are needed to protect human life, prevent Lyme disease caused by deer ticks, reduce property damage and limit habitat degradation caused by overpopulation. MassDOT data shows that there were 3,506 reported collisions with deer in Massachusetts in 2021.

The Governor's budget proposals can be implemented within the existing archery hunting season, streamlining the process, and ensuring efficiency. Given the fact that there has never been an incident of a non-hunter being injured by an archer in the history of the Commonwealth, the Mass Conservation Alliance believes that now is the time to implement these proposals.

Joseph Afonso
Chairman, Mass Conservation Alliance
<https://www.massconservationalliance.org/>

Governor's Reference Link:
https://budget.digital.mass.gov/govbudget/fy23/static/fy2023h2_tab3-2b73653b5f201f01b7b3a2a529ba4138.pdf

