

Legislative Report – May 2018

Included in the Governor's budget bill is legislation that can strip you of your gun rights even if you have not broken **ANY** law!

Domestic Abusers are Prohibited from Possessing Both Handguns and Long Guns

Senator Sue Serino contacted Bill Connors on a couple of issues. One was the "gun violence" legislation buried in the Cuomo budget bill.

As the Senator explained the problem, something as simple as withholding the car keys from your domestic partner could result in the police confiscating all of your firearms, including your long guns. This presumably is done without due process. Gun owners in New York State will have to be very careful in domestic situations and they are going to have to be prepared to defend their rights in court.

I am going to look closer at the legislation to see what the broader implications are.

The Senator also inquired about a bill that she has been asked to carry that could suspend fox hunting.

A09612 – authorizes the DEC to suspend fox hunting (No same as)

A09612 - relates to the biological control of Lyme disease vectors; authorizes the department of environmental conservation to suspend any existing authorization for the taking of foxes when the departments of health and environmental conservation certify that the health and welfare of the human population are in danger from Lyme disease in the area.

I suggested that the bill is not necessary nor advisable. The Legislature has already assigned the responsibility for wildlife management to the DEC. The Legislature should allow DEC to use its Regulatory Authority to manage this if it becomes necessary. The bill is an over-simplification of a very complex problem. There are many, many furbearers and raptors that feed on field mice (the vector that is of concern in the battle to control the spread of Lyme Disease).

A10428 - prohibits marksmanship and/or shooting programs in public schools

I informed the Senator of our concerns with the bill. This shuts down not just firearms programs, but it would also prohibit the National Archery in the Schools Program. There is no "Same As" bill at this time.

New York State Conservation Council

Reynolds Game Farm – the DEC has announced that they will be allowing a community trail to cross the last Game farm in New York State. The decision follows meeting and discussions about if/where the trail should enter and exit the farm.

Three options were discussed; the DEC went with the least desirable under consideration. We advocated for a perimeter trail along the roads that border the property. One interior trail was given virtually no consideration at all.

The trail will be on an abandoned rail bed that already has a utility easement (buried).

Placement of the trail could impact future uses of the game farm (although DEC claims not).

MAJOR BILLS PENDING IN THE 2018 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

This is becoming a very uncertain year for seeing any of our legislative goals being achieved. The Parkland shooting in February has stifled any progress with respect to anything involving firearms and has even had a negative impact on archery issues.

Turmoil surrounding control of the Senate that has resulted from the merger of the regular Democrats and the Independent Democrats leaves control of the Senate in Republican hands through the vote of a single Democrat who has joined the Republican conference. Plus, it is an election year - always a slow time for controversial topics.

We will be pressing the legislature on those issues where we feel we can make some progress and advancement toward favorable results, if not this session, next session.

Crossbow Hunting Enhancements (A479A/S1386A)

Study Cost of Free Hunting and Fishing Licenses (A4844/S693)

Eliminate Back Tags (A619/S2923)

Improving the Investment of the Conservation Fund (A5468/S4575)