

HB 500 - AS INTRODUCED

2015 SESSION

15-0627
10/05

HOUSE BILL **500**

AN ACT repealing the prohibition on the use of silencing devices for taking wildlife.

SPONSORS: Rep. Burt, Hills 39; Rep. Bickford, Straf 3; Rep. Spillane, Rock 2; Rep. Rideout,
Coos 7; Rep. Martin, Merr 23; Sen. Cataldo, Dist 6

COMMITTEE: Fish and Game and Marine Resources

ANALYSIS

This bill repeals provisions which prohibit the use of silencing devices for taking wildlife and impose penalties therefor.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
 Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struck through.~~]
 Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Fifteen

AN ACT repealing the prohibition on the use of silencing devices for taking wildlife.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Title. This act shall be known as the “The Hunters Hearing Protection Act.”

2 2 Findings. The legislature finds that:

3 I. Firearm suppressors lessen the report of a firearm by approximately 30 decibels, thereby
4 allowing hunters to more fully enjoy and participate in the sport.

5 II. Hunting with sound suppressors will help to lessen the hearing damage many hunters
6 suffer from.

7 III. Hunting with a sound suppressor allows new, inexperienced hunters to hunt without ear
8 plugs or ear muffs enabling them to hear important instructions from their mentors (parents,
9 grandparents, or other responsible adults) who are hunting with them.

10 IV. Suppressors decrease the chance of asymmetrical hearing loss or shooters ear.

11 V. Hunting with suppressors lessens the ambient noise heard by neighbors who may be on
12 adjoining property where hunting is taking place. While it does reduce the noise level of a firearm,
13 the firearm is still loud enough so that a neighbor will know someone is shooting.

14 VI. In the 34 states that allow some form of hunting with suppressors not a single state has
15 moved to repeal this practice. It makes for safer shooting and better neighbors.

16 VII. Firearm suppressors are heavily regulated by the federal government, which requires a
17 \$200 tax be paid, a background check conducted, fingerprints be given, sign off by a local chief law
18 enforcement officer, and approximately a 9-month wait to get the paperwork completed before taking
19 possession of a suppressor. This virtually guarantees that abuses with legally owned suppressors
20 are extremely rare.

21 3 Repeal; Fish and Game; Silencing Devices; Penalties. The following are repealed:

22 I. RSA 207:4, relative to the prohibition on the use of silencing devices for taking wildlife.

23 II. RSA 207:46, II, relative to the penalty for a violation of RSA 207:4.

24 4 Effective Date. This act shall take effect upon its passage.