

Wyatt Todd

3/17/20

Letter to House Committee of Natural Resources, Fish & Wildlife,

Thank you for first for taking a quick minute to read this letter. I have been putting this off and I hope it's not too late to make an impact on the vote regarding Bear Dog Hunting.

My father and I have beagles and hunt rabbits in Ripton and surrounding areas during the winter months. During my 35 years of hound hunting (I am 40 years old) we have had several incidents involving dogs and people. In most cases these have been resolved with the other party. Here are two examples to explain my point at the end of this letter.

We were hunting off Natural Turnpike in Ripton when I was a kid and our dogs were approximately 150 yards out in front of us running a hare (howling on the sent). A woman on cross country ski's being pulled by 2 husky's came down the trail and her dogs pulled her off the trail into the woods on her ski's. She was screaming at my father to control our dogs and my father's response was "we are, control yours". We had to quickly catch our dogs as the husky's became very aggressive. This situation could have been worse I remember, we got lucky the husky's didn't kill our dogs.

One other good example is my father was walking with my brother's Short Haired Pointer Moxie (she was an awesome bird dog) just on a summer day on a trail in Goshen. She was not on a leash but he had control over her at all times. A group of horseback riders with a large boxer came up the trail. At first everything was fine, they spoke and went on their separate ways. My father said when they were almost out of sight their boxer came back and attacked Moxie. My father had to beat the boxer with his walking stick as the dog had Moxie by the throat. The group was screaming at my father to not hit their dog. In this case more calls were made and I believe a report was filed.

My point of this letter is to bring to light that "Bear" Hunting Dogs are being singled out. Any dog can get away from the owner and attack another dog, run deer, kill livestock etc. I am sure this happens daily in Vermont. Why are these dogs so different than any other dog or hunting dog?

One fact in my opinion is that there is no better way to get a kid interested in hunting than to take him with a dog. I have brought joy to many youngsters with my hounds. These new laws will be a slippery slope towards other hunting rules. I don't bear hunt with hounds, but will say we have a large bear population now and it's a great tool to control it.

Thank you for your time, please reach out if you would like to speak further,

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Sincerely,

Wyatt Todd