



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**

Testimony By: Barry Londeree
Presented To: House Committee on Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife
In Support Of: H.357 to prohibit the wanton waste of wildlife in Vermont
Date: March 12, 2019

Chair Sheldon and Members of the Committee:

My name is Barry Londeree and I am the Vermont State Director for the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS). On behalf of our Vermont members, supporters, and volunteers, I ask for your support of H.357 to prohibit the wanton waste of wildlife in Vermont.

The HSUS actively works to eliminate the most inhumane and unfair sport hunting practices. These include the use of body-gripping traps and snares, bear-baiting, wildlife killing contests, and captive hunting on fenced properties. We also oppose staged hunting, for which the animals are bred or stocked simply to be shot as living targets. We also oppose the trophy hunting of rare or endangered populations and support an end to the use of lead ammunition since less toxic alternatives are workable and available in the marketplace.

I say all of this to demonstrate that we do not take a position on fair-chase, subsistence hunting, but rather we focus on practices that even many hunters will agree do not align with principles of sportsmanship and respect for the hunted. Those practices include the wanton waste of the wildlife that is held and managed for all of the citizens of Vermont.

Wanton waste refers to killing, or attempting to kill, a wild animal and failing to remove that animal from the land and utilize it for a useful purpose such as consumption of the meat or use of the fur. Unfortunately, we know this is an issue in Vermont. In 2009, a survey of Vermont game wardens revealed that hunters and anglers were not consistent in their efforts to retrieve fish and wildlife. The Department estimated that as many as 60 to 100 wanton waste events occurred each year — many of which were very apparent to the public. In response, the Department supported a ban on wanton waste at that time.

In a recent *Mountain Journal* article, avid hunter and angler Brian Yablonski, who is executive director of the Property and Environment Research Center and is former chairman of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, said: “Hunting has so many headwinds facing it and to have examples of poor hunting—or controversies purported to pass as hunting—does not serve and reinforce the conservation legacy of hunting, which is hunting’s strength. People who engage in unethical behavior are undermining it.” As to what is ethical hunting, Mr. Yablonski added, “The three seminal tests of ethical hunting involve fair chase, humane killing and no wanton waste.”¹

It is for these reasons that we ask for your support of H.357 to make it unlawful to intentionally leave wounded or killed wildlife in the field or forest without making a reasonable effort to retrieve and consume or use that wildlife. Thank you for your kind attention to this issue.

Barry Londeree
Vermont State Director
The Humane Society of the United States

¹ Todd Wilkinson: “A Death of Ethics: Is Hunting Destroying Itself?” *Mountain Journal*, December 12, 2018
<https://mountainjournal.org/hunting-in-america-faces-an-ethical-reckoning>