



**NEW JERSEY GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
14TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT**

**DANIEL R. BENSON**

DEPUTY SPEAKER

3691A NOTTINGHAM WAY

HAMILTON, NJ 08690

(609) 631-0198

FAX: (609) 631-0324

EMAIL: [ASMBENSON@NJLEG.ORG](mailto:ASMBENSON@NJLEG.ORG)

COMMITTEES:

CHAIR,  
TRANSPORTATION AND  
INDEPENDENT AUTHORITIES

HEALTH AND  
SENIOR SERVICES

BUDGET

October 7, 2020

The Honorable Governor Phil Murphy  
Office of the Governor  
P.O. Box 001  
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Governor Murphy,

Thank you for recently deciding to suspend New Jersey's bear hunt after the conclusion of the 2020 season. I am glad you agree that there should be humane, non-lethal methods included in the state's bear management plan. However, I am writing to express my opposition to the upcoming bear hunt on public and private lands for several reasons.

Allowing the bear hunt to move forward, in its entirety, would pose a serious risk to public health by undermining the health and safety guidelines enforced due to COVID-19. For one, it would encourage out-of-state hunters to travel to New Jersey, as our State is one of two that allows trophy hunting bear cubs. Increased interstate travel, combined with large gatherings of hunters, may accelerate the transmission of COVID-19 as our State currently works to control its spread.

Additionally, while Executive Order No. 34 sought to protect black bears on public State-owned land, ambiguity in the order's intent could render it unenforceable and lead to hunting occurring on unauthorized lands. Without clear rules for the hunt, wildlife could be placed at risk.

As such, I respectfully request that you suspend the upcoming 2020 bear hunt in its entirety. If you have any questions or wish to speak with me directly, please contact my office at (609) 631-0198 or [AsmBenson@njleg.org](mailto:AsmBenson@njleg.org). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Benson".

Daniel R. Benson  
Assemblyman, 14<sup>th</sup> District