



NEW JERSEY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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30 October 2020

GOVERNOR PHILIP D. MURPHY

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

P.O. Box 001, Trenton, NJ 08625-0001

Dear Governor Murphy:

I applaud your intention to suspend the black bear hunt in future years while exploring other methods by which to reduce the animals' population in the State of New Jersey without killing them.

The fact remains, however, that hundreds of black bears have already been killed since the 2020 hunt began earlier this month, and hundreds more may perish should the December round of hunting occur as scheduled. I respectfully urge you to issue an executive order mandating the immediate suspension of all bear-hunting activity in New Jersey for the duration of this calendar year.

As it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing the bear hunt to continue poses a threat to the health and safety of New Jerseyans. Individuals traveling to New Jersey from other states may not wear masks or practice social distancing, thus harming the measures we have already taken under your leadership to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus.

More broadly, the state-sanctioned bear hunt is cruel and inhumane. As the first prime sponsor of Assembly Bill 795, which would ban cosmetics testing on animals, I cannot remain silent while hundreds of bears are needlessly killed with razor-tipped arrows and muzzleloaders, which inflict painful wounds and gashes on bears and cause massive hemorrhages. If it is already your intention to suspend the black bear hunt in the future, it is worth considering acting on this intention now.

I stand in solidarity with the following members of the New Jersey Legislature who have requested that you issue an executive order immediately suspending the 2020 bear hunt: Senators Cunningham, Gopal, Singleton, Stack, Turner, and Weinberg; and Assemblypersons Benson, Chaparro, Freiman, Giblin, Holley, Jasey, Johnson, Mukherji, Murphy, Swain, Vainieri Huttel, and Zwicker.

I thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anthony S. Verrelli".

ASSEMBLYMAN ANTHONY S. VERRELLI
FIFTEENTH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT
NEW JERSEY GENERAL ASSEMBLY