



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mike Martucci

## Martucci, Gunther Pass Bill Helping Sportsmen, Protecting Animal Welfare

MIKE MARTUCCI June 2, 2021

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### *Legislation Expands the State's Yearling Buck Protection Program in the Members' Districts*

**Albany, NY – Senator Mike Martucci (R,C,I–Hudson Valley and Catskills) and Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther (D,WF,I–Forestburgh)** announced two-house passage of legislation that will expand protections for yearling bucks in a substantial portion of the Catskills, S5694 and A6182. The bill will soon be sent to the Governor for his signature.

“The New York State DEC’s yearling buck protection program is overwhelmingly popular and viewed by sportsmen in my district as beneficial to both hunters and the local deer population,” **said Senator Martucci**. “I am proud to sponsor this legislation and I am pleased to work in bipartisan fashion with Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther, on behalf of our shared constituency, to support this commonsense conservation effort and make it law.”

The bill formalizes into statute existing Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) policy which holds a mandatory antler point restriction (AR) in select wildlife management units (WMUs) in Southeastern New York. The WMUs aided by the Senator’s and Assemblywoman’s bill are 3H in Sullivan and Ulster counties and 3K in Sullivan and Orange counties. All towns within the boundaries of WMUs 3H and 3K are represented by Senator Martucci in the 42<sup>nd</sup> Senate District, with the vast majority located in Sullivan County and also represented by Assemblywoman Gunther in the 100<sup>th</sup> Assembly District.

“As Chair of the New York State Legislative Sportsmen’s Caucus, I am proud to have sponsored this important bill in the Assembly. Our sportsmen overwhelmingly support the yearling buck protection program, and its continued success is vital for our area. I want to thank Senator Martucci for his partnership and for getting this bill passed in the Senate,” **said Assemblywoman Gunther**.

The Federation of Sportsmen’s Clubs in Sullivan County, Inc. had requested this legislative safeguard for the yearling buck protection program after seeing its success. The program restricts hunters to harvest adult male whitetail deer (bucks) with at least 1 antler with 3 or more points that are at least 1 inch long. The purpose of the program is to reduce the number of yearling (1.5-year-old) bucks that are harvested, allowing them to reach full maturity and creating a healthier, more diverse deer population overall. The program also allows for a more challenging hunting environment for prospective hunters, one that they enjoy and encourage.

“The Federation of Sportsmen’s Clubs of Sullivan County would like to thank Senator Mike Martucci for his tireless efforts on Senate Bill S5694, which adds WMUs 3H and 3K to the Yearling Buck Protection Act,” **said John S. Van Etten, President of the Federation of Sportsmen’s Clubs of Sullivan County, Inc.** “This Bill benefits all of the sportsmen and sportswomen of Sullivan County and benefits our deer herd. With the passage of S5694 today, and the previous passage of its sister Bill A6182, sponsored by Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther, we anxiously await the signature of Governor Cuomo to finalize its enactment as law. Again, we would like to thank Senator Mike Martucci and Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther for spearheading this legislation on our behalf.”

A supermajority of hunters, including those members of the Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs of Sullivan County, are supportive of the program’s permanent adoption into New York State law.

*Mike Martucci serves as the Senator for New York's 42<sup>nd</sup> State Senate District which comprises all of Sullivan County and parts of Orange, Ulster, and Delaware counties. He is the ranking member of the Senate Standing Committees on Disabilities and Commerce, Economic Development And Small Business.*

*Aileen Gunther represents New York's 100<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, which comprises parts of Sullivan and Orange counties. She is the Chair of the Assembly Mental Health Committee and is a member of the Agriculture, Environmental Conservation, Health, and Racing and Wagering committees.*

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