

Name  
Address  
City, State, Zip  
Email

Senator or Assembly Member Name  
Room #  
LOB  
Albany, NY 12247

Re: Assembly Bill A7778A and Senate Bill S7202

Dear Senator / Assembly Member,

I am writing to ask your support of Assembly bill A7778A and Senate bill S7202, which are currently being held in the Environmental Conservation Committee.

- New York's population of mourning doves have been increasing for the last 50 years. All 62 counties in New York have mourning doves. The dove population in New York is more than the total NY population of turkey and deer put together. While there is an estimated population of 249,000 turkeys and about 1 million deer in NY; there are about 10 million doves (this was Cornell University's 1980 estimate.)
- New York's mourning doves have been subject to hunting for decades. This is because doves are migratory and all southern states hunt doves. It is also likely that there is illegal hunting or poaching of doves within New York.
- Over 2 million doves have been banded since 1903 and over 90,000 bands have been recovered. Subsequent analyses have yielded excellent information on the migration routes of doves. It has been determined the winter range of doves is generally south of the thirty-ninth parallel, a line that extends from Washington DC through Kansas and Carson City, Nevada.
- Most of NY's doves winter in South and North Carolina, two states in which dove hunting is extremely popular. Thirty percent of the doves harvested in these states are migrants from northeastern states. In 2013 North Carolina hunters harvested 555,000 doves. In 2014 NC hunters bagged 626,000. South Carolina harvested 372,000 in 2013 and 681,000 in 2014. Doves from the northeast account for thirty percent of that harvest.
- Additionally, movement of birds is not restricted to north-south migration and doves are hunted sustainably all around NY in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Ontario, Quebec, and Rhode Island. Pennsylvania has hunted doves since 1946 and the annual harvest is around 203,000. Ohio hunters harvest 136,000 doves. Delaware harvests 39,000. Rhode Island does not have many hunters, but 100 dove hunters harvest 500 doves annually. At this time, information about harvest rates for Ontario and Quebec are not available.
- There is no conservation or biological reason to deny NY sportsmen the dove hunting opportunity they have pursued since 1980. Continued denial is inappropriate as the DEC's legal mandate recognizes harvest as a desirable use of fish and wildlife resources for the public benefit.

Sincerely,

Your Name