



HR0398

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, Lead is a potent neurotoxicant that is unsafe for  
3 humans, wildlife, and the environment; lead ammunition  
4 needlessly exposes humans and other animals to this  
5 life-threatening poison; the Centers for Disease Control  
6 states that there is no safe level of lead exposure; lead has  
7 been removed from various paints, gasolines, pipes, and many  
8 other items to protect human health and the environment; and

9           WHEREAS, Lead ammunition is a threat to wildlife; more than  
10 130 species, including humans, have been exposed to or killed  
11 by ingesting lead shot, bullet fragments, or prey contaminated  
12 with spent lead ammunition; animals can fall victim to spent  
13 lead ammunition through two avenues; primary poisoning occurs  
14 when an animal ingests spent ammunition directly from the  
15 environment, usually when foraging for food on the ground;  
16 secondary poisoning occurs when an animal consumes wounded or  
17 dead prey or scavenges gutpiles contaminated with lead  
18 ammunition left behind by hunters; and

19           WHEREAS, Lead ammunition is toxic; a single ingested  
20 shotgun pellet or bullet fragment is sufficient to cause brain  
21 damage in birds, resulting in inhibition of critical  
22 neuromuscular, auditory, and visual responses; lead poisoning  
23 can induce lethargy, blindness, paralysis of lungs and the

1 intestinal tract, various organ failure, seizure, and death in  
2 wild animals; and

3       WHEREAS, The effects of spent lead ammunition are evident  
4 in dove hunting; since doves are small and have an erratic  
5 flight path, it often takes an average of five to eight shots  
6 to hit the animal; according to the United States Fish and  
7 Wildlife Service, an estimated 15-20 million mourning doves are  
8 harvested annually; if every hunter is shooting with lead, this  
9 would equate to roughly 5.2-7 million pounds of lead dispersed  
10 into the environment every year; and

11       WHEREAS, Lead ammunition is a threat to human health; lead  
12 is a potent neurotoxin, for which no safe level of exposure has  
13 been identified; individuals who consume meat from animals  
14 killed with lead ammunition are at risk for lead exposure;  
15 several studies using x-ray imaging have shown that lead  
16 ammunition is highly fragmentable and nearly impossible to  
17 completely remove from meat; and

18       WHEREAS, Effective alternatives to lead ammunition are  
19 widely available and effective; for shot, the United States  
20 Fish and Wildlife Service has approved a dozen nontoxic shot  
21 types; steel, copper, and bismuth are among the most common  
22 non-lead materials and are readily available at major  
23 outfitters; and

1           WHEREAS, Ammunition regulations are effective; the  
2 mandated use of non-toxic ammunition has proven to be an  
3 extremely effective management approach to lead poisoning; in  
4 1991, United States Fish and Wildlife Service required the use  
5 of non-lead shot for the hunting of waterfowl nationwide;  
6 within just six years, researchers found significant  
7 improvements in the blood and bone lead levels in a variety of  
8 waterfowl species; and

9           WHEREAS, Restrictions on ammunition are commonplace; 34  
10 states have increased restrictions on lead ammunition beyond  
11 the 1991 federal waterfowl regulation; as a result of its  
12 success, the National Park Service announced in 2009 that they  
13 would begin eliminating the use of lead ammunition; the United  
14 States Army has invested resources and intelligence toward  
15 creating and switching to non-toxic ammunition, citing  
16 environmental and animal welfare concerns; and

17           WHEREAS, Scientists resoundingly agree that spent lead  
18 ammunition poses a significant risk to human health and  
19 wildlife; toxicologists, veterinarians, pathologists,  
20 physicians, epidemiologists, biologists, and other experts  
21 have advised against the use of lead in ammunition due to its  
22 toxic effects; switching to non-lead ammunition is an easy way  
23 to protect wildlife and people from the dangers of spent lead

1 ammunition; therefore, be it

2       RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
3 HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
4 we urge the General Assembly to support all efforts to restrict  
5 the use of lead shotshells to take wildlife.