

Erie County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Inc.



February 26, 2026

Legislator Frank J. Todaro
92 Franklin Street, 4th Floor
Buffalo, NY 14202

Re: Support for Local Law Intro. 3-1 (2026) – Youth Hunting Authorization

Dear Honorable Members of the Erie County Legislature,

On behalf of the Erie County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, I write in strong support of Local Law Intro. 3-1 (2026), which would authorize licensed twelve (12) and thirteen (13) year-old hunters to hunt deer with a firearm or crossbow under the supervision of a qualified adult.

This legislation allows Erie County to participate in New York State's existing youth hunting program under Environmental Conservation Law 11-0935, which has been successfully implemented across much of the state with strict safety requirements. The program requires youth hunters to be licensed, under the direct supervision of an experienced adult, and in full compliance with all state laws, ensuring a controlled and responsible environment.

Importantly, this program has demonstrated a strong safety record. According to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, thousands of youth hunters have participated annually with no documented hunting-related incidents, violations, or license revocations involving 12- and 13-year-old participants. This clearly shows that youth hunting, when properly supervised, is safe and effective.

Beyond safety, this legislation supports conservation, education, and mentorship. Hunting plays a vital role in wildlife management and maintaining balanced deer populations, while also passing on important values such as responsibility, ethics, and respect for natural resources. Allowing experienced hunters to mentor youth ensures these traditions continue for future generations.

Erie County should not be excluded from a program that has proven successful across New York State. This law provides a responsible opportunity for youth participation while maintaining strong safety standards.

For these reasons, the Erie County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs respectfully urges the Legislature to adopt Local Law Intro. 3-1 (2026).

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jack Coad", is written over a white background.

Jack Coad, President
Erie County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs
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