

February 2, 2023

Submitted by: Rick Mohan, President of the North Dakota Sportfishing Congress (NDSFC)

Dear Chairman Porter, Vice Chairman Anderson members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee

I am not submitting this testimony on behalf of the North Dakota Sport Fishing Congress. This is my own opinion.

Rich Brueckner, past president recently submitted testimony in opposition to HB 1538 on behalf of the NDSFC. While the board of the NDSFC did vote to oppose HB 1538, the vote was not unanimous. Mr. Brueckner represented all the members clubs of the NDSFC as being opposed to HB 1538. This is not the case.

My affiliation with the NDSFC is on behalf of FM Walleyes Unlimited. FM Walleyes Unlimited has taken no position regarding HB 1538 due to timing of our board meetings and when the hearing was scheduled. Many of our members do support HB 1538.

I also want to submit my support for HB 1538. The proposed legislation addresses many issues.

The application of the current statute is the sole roadblock for student angling in North Dakota. Currently students are prevented from being able to participate in high school angling programs at home in ND.

The current statute prevents organizations from inside and outside of the state of ND from holding and promoting youth angling events.

The current statute and application of this legislation is negatively impacting North Dakota communities who rely on recreational income in their communities. In some situations, communities are forced to give up revenue in the millions.

The opposition to the proposed changes can be narrowed down to three general categories:

- Current grantees of conservation fees.
- Individuals and groups who would prefer to keep any outside angler from in or out of state away from their local waters.
- Individuals and groups who disapprove of tournament angling.

I appose all these points of view.

I ask you to support of HB 1538.

Kind regards,

Rick

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