

Testimony in Support of SB 2216
Ducks Unlimited North Dakota
Ryan Taylor, DU director of public policy
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Chairman Patten and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. My name is Ryan Taylor, and I'm the director of public policy for Ducks Unlimited in ND, SD and Montana. On behalf of DU, I am testifying in support of SB 2216, a bill to create a state waterfowl habitat stamp and a state waterfowl habitat improvement fund. We do believe there's an unintended error in how the bill was written, and believe the intent was for the waterfowl stamp to be for waterfowl hunters and not all small game license holders. In other states, we call something like this a 'state duck stamp' as it is a state level stamp for duck and waterfowl hunters, and hope that an amendment could remedy that in this bill.

Ducks Unlimited has long supported the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation and the American System of Conservation Funding, a unique "user pays, public benefits" approach that has been the lifeblood of successful scientific wildlife management partnered between the hunting and fishing community and professional biologists and wildlife managers. SB 2216 follows in that model as it pertains to waterfowl hunting in North Dakota, sustaining and improving the habitat that waterfowl depend on for breeding, feeding and migration, and support for the next generation who follow in our hunting heritage. As always, we trust the work of the sponsors, committee, and experts to work out what's appropriate for the details of the fees and the management of the fund itself. Of course, we're happy to speak from our experience in meeting our habitat mission in this state and others around the country if it's helpful in your committee work.

As an organization, Ducks Unlimited is the world leader in wetlands and waterfowl conservation. We are proud to count more than 4,000 North Dakotans as members and nearly 700,000 wetlands and waterfowl enthusiasts as members across the country. DU's mission is habitat that benefits not only waterfowl, but also other wildlife, people, communities and working lands.

We appreciate the efforts of the sponsor, Sen. Cleary, the cosponsors and the others who'll testify today about their work in support of this bill. We are heartened by the enthusiasm for waterfowling and investing in habitat and youth hunting for the betterment of North Dakota, the hunting community, and all who appreciate and enjoy our abundant natural resources.