

TESTIMONY OF

**Mike Jensen, Outdoor Promotions Manager Tourism and Marketing Division  
North Dakota Department of Commerce**

Chairman Porter and members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee, my name is Mike Jensen. I am the Outdoor Promotions Manager for the Tourism & Marketing Division of the North Dakota Department of Commerce.

I am testifying in support of HB 1409 that removes the requirement that the nonresident youth hunter's state of residence provides reciprocal licensing agreements to allow the purchase a resident license to fish and hunt small game and waterfowl in North Dakota.

When state tourism travel counselors are speaking with potential visitors, it can be difficult and often confusing to answer inquiries whether a youth hunter is allowed to hunt or fish with a resident license. For parents and grandparents wanting to bring their children or grandchildren to experience some of the best parts of North Dakota, the difference in license cost for each child could be as high as \$250-300 dollars if they are wishing to fish and hunt both waterfowl and upland game.

It is important that we encourage youth to embrace outdoor recreation and continue our cultural traditions that include hunting and fishing. Experiences in the outdoors like hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, and biking are the ones that will hook youth early and make them fall in love with North Dakota. These outdoor recreation travelers drive the third largest industry in North Dakota and are the easiest targets in efforts to attract new residents.

I can recall conversations I had in Sioux Falls, Billings and Omaha with people at consumer travel shows that were seeking hunting/fishing vacation destinations. I had to explain to our neighbors in South Dakota and Montana as well as some from Iowa that their children and grandchildren under 16 would need to purchase adult licenses.

I would like to see other states give our residents the same hunting access that they are given here in North Dakota. I also understand not all situations are the same and we are not able to give nonresidents reciprocal rights to some things. For example, Montana residents are not given the same opportunity to apply for elk tags in North Dakota, yet our residents can apply for elk tags in their state. Youth hunters should not be put in the middle of these discussions.

I request a do pass vote on HB 1409 from the committee so youth hunter from across the country are welcomed and encouraged to join their families and create lifelong memories in North Dakota.