

Testimony in support of: North Dakota House Bill 1538-A Bill for an Act to amend and reenact subsection 20 of section 20.1-02-05 of the North Dakota Century Code

Date: 01/31/2023

Submitted by: Alexandra Axtman

Address: 20 Country Rd Rugby Nd 58368

To: Representative Porter and Members of the North Dakota House Energy and Natural Resources Committee

I am writing to voice my support for your House Bill 1538.

I may not be the most avid outdoors woman. But I do enjoy spending time on the great waters ND has to offer. Whether this be fishing, floating, or ripping around on the jet skis.

Growing up in Minnesota I was able to be involved in sports of all kinds from a young age. After graduating college, I came back to coach girls' hockey at the Highschool level. While I was involved in the Highschool system one thing really surprised me, I was shocked at the new sports that were becoming available to students. I came back to kids talking about shooting trap competitively and fishing! I could not believe the number of students that were in these sports.

Now fast-forward 5 years and I move to North Dakota. Now I am not involved in Highschool sports at this time but I was shocked to hear there is no High School fishing. As popular as it has become in Minnesota in a short amount of time.

I was also surprised to find out that the main reason was due to the way the current century code is written. With the way the current century code is written it does not make it feasible for High Schools to do this as many would not be able to afford the conservation fee. This is substantially hindering the students and the ability to even have an opportunity to participate. Not only does this directly impact the kids on a competitive side, but we are forgetting about the education side not only to the students but the parents as well. Education taught could be but not limited to, Conservation, Aquatic Nuisance, and Boater Safety. Besides the direct benefits of a program like this. There are many indirect benefits as well. There are many families that may not fish because they do not know how to or do not have the means to. This would give those families the opportunities to learn through their children. This would add to an increase in total number of fishing licenses sold in the state allowing more people to enjoy the great outdoors this great state has to offer.

I will leave you with this thought. In this day's society that likes to cancel things that they do not agree with. I don't know why we would not do everything in our power to promote and get the youth involved as young as possible. There is strength in numbers.

It is for these reasons that I overwhelmingly support Bill 1538. Thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,

*Alli Axtman*

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