

Testimony in favor of HB 1538  
House Energy and Natural Resources Committee

February 1, 2023

Chairman Porter and Committee Members:

My name is Dane Heid and I am a current resident of Bismarck, ND. I would like to support my testimony in support of **HB 1538**.

I have fished all over the state of ND since I can remember. Many weeks and weekends have been spent throughout the great state parks and campgrounds surrounding Lake Sakakwea, Devils Lake and the Missouri River. Many trips were fun, family-oriented weekends of fishing and typical campground activities. However, there were a lot of trips taken with the family where my dad and his tournament partners would be pre-fishing for upcoming competitions. At that point, it didn't make much difference to me, I just wanted to be on or near the water. Now that I have young children, I've enjoyed having them by my side or at least at the ramp as I prepare for tournaments. The current conservation fee has already pushed out major tournament trails to surrounding states, negatively impacting the local economies along with the exposure of another generation of young anglers. I'm afraid that my kids won't have the same opportunities as me, simply because of policy changes and greed.

From a biological standpoint, the fisheries of ND remain healthy and continue to provide angling opportunities to all skill levels and backgrounds. I feel like that is a direct result from the work of the ND Game and Fish, volunteers and the general public whether it be direct or indirect with the purchases of hunting and fishing gear/tags/licenses/etc. The 10% conservation fee without a cap has proven to be detrimental to the residents of ND and to the State of North Dakota, both of which could use the extra income and exposure these larger tournaments bring in.

In closing, I respectfully ask that you pass HB 1538 to prove to our younger generations of anglers that we care about creating interactions with positive role models and a healthier economy.

Sincerely,

Dane M. Heid, D.C.