

**Testimony in support of:** North Dakota House Bill 1538

**Date:** Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023

**Submitted by:** Tyler Noot

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

I am writing this testimony as an outdoors oriented, conservation minded individual whom only wants to see EVERY North Dakotan exceed at what they aspire to be or represent. I feel the conservation fee of old is by far out dated and severely segregates one community of anglers, the tournament anglers. So therefore, I support the passing of this bill.

I don't want to hear one mention of boat ramps, and how tournament anglers crowd out boat ramps. Do multiple pontoons filled to or possibly even in excess of the coast guard rating use boat ramps? How many pontoons are registered in ND? Do jet ski's crowd boat ramps? How many of those are registered in ND? Yea there's more and more of those every year as well. But do you know what we are seeing less and less of every year? Tournament anglers fishing on their own bodies of water in ND, many are leaving to fish circuits in other states, or are fishing major circuits that don't come to ND anymore because they cant afford to! That opens up another thought if a circuit isn't coming here, neither are all the anglers from WI, MN, IA, MI, IN, SD, WY, and many other states! Therefor diminishing the small town economies even more, the backbone of America isn't getting what they could because of a tax on a small segregated group, and yet I go to the boat ramp with my new pickup, fancy fiberglass boat, and top of the line electronics, and I Tyler Noot don't have to contribute one dollar to conservation? Yet generally speaking the weekend anglers are the ones going out trying to catch a limit to fill the freezer, did you know most tournament anglers don't keep fish during prefishing because its considered bad karma? Or by the end of the day the just want to throw a steak on the grill and go replenish all the tackle they lost that day only to do it all over again!

Is \$250 fair for a tournament registration? I sure think so.

Is the old 10% tax fair on tournament prize pots? I highly contest this idea and thought process. I'll even explain why!

How much money did the 10% raise in 2022? Someone told me between \$26,000 and 27,000

So If we really want money for conservation, we ALL should contribute. But let's be fair and not charge the senior citizens or the disabled!

Lets keep it low and charge \$5 per individual resident and Non Resident.

\$8 per married couple fishing

\$2 for every short-term license whether its 10 days or 3 days.

\$20 annually for boats

Seems pretty cheap doesn't it? That's because when you spread it out fairly and to everyone it is cheap individually, but with this system the state would have garnered nearly **1.7 million dollars** in 2022 alone! That has now become useful money, acquired in a fair and just way. Call in a access fee, many other states do it, heck a lot of areas you pay every time you use a access, we do that in our state parks already and look how nice those docks are.

I support conservation and sustainability in many other states and through several organizations, I always will until I cant afford to, and at that time I'll find a new way to contribute. Less then 1% of anglers will never make a difference but all of us contributing and working together would make a huge difference!

In closing you need to ask who and what is really losing if this bill or a version of it doesn't come to fruition in the near future. The fish aren't losing, the docks certainly aren't losing, its local anglers who want to compete on a bigger stage and in front of there own home grown ND crowd. It's the gas stations, and bait shops who don't get the anticipation and build up of a major tournament coming to town! Some of these small towns could really use the boost in economy.

Sincerely,

Tyler Noot