

Environment Committee Testimony March 7 2012

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Environment Committee,

My name is Mike Ose. I am currently the Chairman for the Conservation Advisory Council. The council, which consists of 25 sportsmen groups throughout the state and nation, works in conjunction with the DEEP to help advise them on conservation and environmental issues. I ask you to support Bill #83 Archery Hunting on Sunday on private land.

As vice chairman and now chairman of the Conservation Advisory Council, we have discussed this idea with the DEP, now DEEP, for many years. The original proposal, to hunt all species with all implements on Sundays, has now been modified and supported by the DEEP to be used as a deer management tool.

As a bow hunter, I am very much in favor of creating opportunity. This bill will give bow hunters more opportunity to control the deer population on private land. Many hunters only have weekends to hunt. In these economic times, many hunters will opt to work overtime on Saturdays to provide for their families and having Sunday on private land to hunt will give them an opportunity to also provide for their family. We heard testimony similar to this, last year. Hunters are always looking for access and opportunity, and if there is any way we can help control the deer population, we will. And, I would like this committee to understand that hunting has been the proven method of controlling animal populations.

Sportsmen pay for the privilege to hunt. Not only do they contribute to the general fund, but they stimulate local economies as they travel throughout the state. Expanding hunting opportunities will recruit more hunters, therefore adding to the state's economy.

Ultimately, the landowner has the right to grant permission to the hunter for what implement he will allow and when he can hunt. This bill is the right thing to do for the landowners.

This bill was presented to this committee last year. As I recall, Ms Mushinsky had concerns about hunting near blazed trails that pass through private land. A 40 yd set back compromise was reached with discussion with Mr. Piscopo. At this stage, I will accept this compromise, but my question is: I am to set up 40yds from a blazed trail on private land on a Sunday, but not Monday through Saturday? This request is certainly NOT an issue of safety.

Last year, this committee also accepted this compromise and voted in favor to move the bill forward. I urge you to pass this bill again and move it forward.

Mr. Chairman, as a chairman of one distinguished committee to another, I applaud your patience and thank you for your service.

I thank you all for your service and your history of support for conservation issues.

Sincerely,

Michael Ose

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