



Connecticut Department of
**ENERGY &
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Public Hearing – February 28, 2014
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Interim Commissioner Robert J. Klee
Presented By Deputy Commissioner Susan Whalen

Raised House Bill No.5306 – AN ACT CONCERNING A RANDOM DRAWING FOR A LIFETIME HUNTING OR FRESHWATER FISHING LICENSE.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding Raised House Bill No. 5306 – An Act Concerning a Random Drawing for a Lifetime Hunting or Freshwater Fishing License. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) welcomes the opportunity to offer the following testimony.

This bill seeks to have DEEP adopt regulations establishing a program under which annual drawings will be held and lifetime hunting and freshwater fishing licenses awarded to Connecticut state residents. As written, the number of lifetime licenses issued would be at the agency's discretion provided a minimum of one lifetime hunting license and one lifetime freshwater fishing license are awarded annually. The bill includes a provision requiring the agency to publicize the drawings.

We support the general intent of this proposal which is to generate public interest and thereby increase license sales and participation in hunting and fishing. Hunting and Fishing are healthy outdoor activities and lifetime hunters and anglers are among the public's most knowledgeable, passionate, and effective conservationists. We also recognize that a lifetime license is a prize of significant value and that the number issued annually should be kept small.

We are concerned however, that some might seek to expand this proposal to require the agency to offer lifetime licenses for sale to the public. Our concern is that lifetime licenses in other states are typically sold at a price that is too low to cover the long-term cost of doing business and therefore, while attractive to customers, result in a loss of revenue that is important for supporting programs. In large states with substantially greater numbers of hunters and anglers this revenue loss can be more easily absorbed than in small states such as Connecticut.

In 2006 DEEP performed an economic analysis to determine the breakeven cost structure for a lifetime freshwater fishing license given the cost of a license at that time (\$20 per year) and various interest rate and cost-of-service scenarios. The result was that a lifetime license for a 16 year old would need to be sold at a price of \$980 - \$1,400. Today's higher license fees would result in an even greater breakeven cost.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact Robert LaFrance, DEEP's Director of Governmental Affairs, at 860.424.3401 or Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov (or, Elizabeth McAuliffe, DEEP Legislative Liaison, at 860.424.3458 or Elizabeth.McAuliffe@ct.gov).