

Denny Fox

AIM Weekend Walleye Series

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**In regard to House Bill 1538**

My name is Denny Fox and I represent a company doing business in North Dakota called Anglers Insight Marketing LLC. I am the National Tournament Director for a host of Walleye Tournaments called AIM Weekend Walleye Series (AWWS). The AWWS has been in business since 2014 and I have worked for them from the beginning. AWWS develops and executes 21 Walleye tournaments a year. We do business in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and North Dakota. AWWS facilitates 5 events in North Dakota and has worked here since 2016.

What I would like to address is the cost of doing business in North Dakota verses the other states.

Permits for the use of public waters is common in almost every state. Each state puts a flat fee value to that permit. In Wisconsin and Iowa it is \$25.00. In Minnesota it is \$250.00.

North Dakota is the only place that I do business that attaches a permit fee based on how much money is charged at the event.

The current North Dakota rule states that 10% of the entry fee must be paid to the Game and Fish as a conservation fee. If we have our maximum limit of 100 boats at an event, and the entry fee is \$350.00 per boat, the conservation fee for that event is \$3,500.00. As you can see it is way out of line compared to other states in the region.

This is a problem for the Anglers in ND as that money must come from somewhere and that somewhere is from their payouts. The AWWS pays out as much money as we can from entry fees, 80% in ND, but we still need to pay our bills to stay afloat in ND.

Furthermore, there is in Chapter 30-03-05 Fishing Contests section 30-03-05-03 Use of Proceeds, a provision that states, Contests with no entry fee but still subject to regulations as defined in subsection 2 of section 30-03-05-01, are required to submit a \$10,000 conservation fee. This rule is directly affecting YOUR anglers, let me explain.

Since the AWWS operates in many states, it also runs a National Championship where there is NO ENTRY FEE. 10 Teams qualify from every division to fish against the best 10 from the other 3 divisions. Winners receive a Boat Motor Trailer package valued at over \$100,000 plus many other prizes and money. We cannot have this event in North Dakota because we would have to pay \$10,000 to do so. In return your anglers do not get home water advantage.

To sum this up, I would encourage the elected officials to streamline the permitting process in ND for their anglers to take advantage of what they have earned. Please vote yes on HB1538 and institute a flat permit fee for fishing tournaments in the Great state of North Dakota.

Thank You for your time.