

2021 HOUSE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

HB 1178

2021 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Energy and Natural Resources Committee Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

HB 1178
1/21/2021

Relating to hunting licenses for nonresident members of the armed forces

2:36 PM

Chairman Porter opened the hearing on HB 1178.

Present: Representatives Porter, Damschen, Anderson, Bosch, Devlin, Heinert, Keiser, Lefor, Marschall, Roers Jones, M Ruby, Zubke, Guggisberg, and Ista.

Discussion Topics:

- Non resident military persons in ND
- ND deer lottery exclusion
- Impact on hunting units by nonresident hunters

#2177 Rep Skroch introduced HB 1178

#2092 John Bradley, ND Wildlife Federation

#2005 Jim Nelson, legislative director, ND Veterans Legislative Council

Additional written testimony:

#2107 Michael Erickson

#2108 Jason Erickson

#2736 Ron Kill

Closed the hearing 3:02 PM

Kathleen Davis, Committee Clerk

TESTIMONY FOR HB 1178
HOUSE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE
Representative Kathy Skroch
67th ND Legislative Session

Chairman Porter and members of the Natural Resources Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to appear before your committee today to introduce HB 1178. This change in subsection 12 of section 20.1-02-05 of NDCC was brought by the request of individual members of the U.S. military serving in the state of North Dakota.

There are military persons serving in ND who are not residents of the state. These same individuals are often not able to hunt in their state of residents due to a variety of circumstances.

Current law provides for non-resident military serving on duty or on leave in ND to purchase a resident license in subdivision c. of subsection 12. However, within the subsection there is an exclusion for participation in the deer lottery. This bill will allow non-resident military persons who qualify for a resident license to also qualify to file a resident deer lottery application.

This does not guarantee an issue of a deer license. Any application is subject to the same limits currently used within the lottery. In addition, the bill does not negatively impact revenue to the ND Game and Fish Department.

I have asked Terry Steinwand, ND Game and Fish Director, to give neutral testimony and answer any questions the committee may have with regard to ND licenses.

Thank you.

Questions?

Representative Kathy Skroch

District 26, Lidgerwood, ND



NORTH DAKOTA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

Testimony of John Bradley North Dakota Wildlife Federation House Bill 1178 House Energy & Natural Resources Committee January 21, 2021

Chairman Porter, members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee,

For the record, I am John Bradley, Executive Director of the North Dakota Wildlife Federation (NDWF). I am here today representing our 1,500 members and 15 affiliated wildlife and sportsmen's club across North Dakota.

NDWF urges a do not pass on HB 1178. Again, it is tough to come out against a bill that benefits active duty military. NDWF believes in an equitable opportunity for residents in the deer lottery system. Passage of HB 1178 would set a precedent for other special interest groups to come in and demand special treatment. In 2020, over 30,000 residents were unsuccessful in the first and second deer lotteries. In the past, even more residents have been unsuccessful. Allowing nonresident active-duty military would increase the number of unsuccessful resident applicants proportionally and would be an unwelcome change to North Dakota resident hunters.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions that the committee might have.

The North Dakota Veterans Legislative Council is in support of this legislation and urges your yes vote Thank you

Dear Chairman Todd Porter and members of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

My name is Michael Erickson and I am resident of Lidgerwood, ND. I am writing this letter to express my support for legislation regarding hunting licenses for non-resident members of the North Dakota National Guard.

I have served in the Minnesota National Guard for 16 years and have recently transferred to the North Dakota National Guard. I was a resident of North Dakota for a significant portion of the 16 years spent serving in the MN National Guard. During that time, I witnessed first-hand the positive affects of Legislation which MN has in place regarding actively serving members of the MN National Guard who are non-residents. In MN actively drilling members of the MN National Guard can purchase MN hunting and fishing licenses at resident rate regardless of residency status.

Military readiness is directly impacted by unit cohesion and a sense of comradery amongst fellow Service Members. Building that closeness is challenging for National Guard units as members are commonly spread throughout the state and even country. I feel that one of the greatest resources of the State of North Dakota is the plentiful hunting and fishing opportunities throughout the state. It is my favorite recreational activity and something that I derive great pleasure in introducing to others. I would love to be able to spend time building lasting relationships with my fellow Service Members while enjoying hunting and fishing in ND. For non-resident Service Members the short hunting periods offered to out of state hunters and the prohibitive cost of licenses creates a significant barrier to these Soldiers to enjoy the natural resources of a state they have sworn to serve and defend. I would like to see ND National Guard Members to be able to enjoy the same benefits as Soldiers serving in the MN National Guard in terms of outdoor recreational activities.

I sincerely thank you in your consideration on this topic.

Respectfully,

Michael Erickson

ATTN: Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

RE: Non-resident Hunting/Fishing Licenses for North Dakota National Guard Service Members.

Dear Respected Members of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources:

I wanted to formally express my support for potential legislation regarding hunting/fishing licenses for non-resident Service Members of the North Dakota National Guard. Before I go on, I would first like to introduce myself. My name is Jason Erickson and I am currently a resident of Breckenridge, MN. I grew up for a good part of my childhood on my grandparents' farm near Hankinson, North Dakota, and I attended North Dakota State University for my undergraduate degree and the University of North Dakota for my graduate degree. For the past nine years I served with the Minnesota National Guard, and just recently transferred to the North Dakota National Guard. North Dakota is as much if not more of home to me than Minnesota.

Hunting and the outdoors are some of my most prized ways to spend my free time. However, that was not always the case. Up until about the age of twelve I really had no interest in hunting, as my father was never a hunter. That changed in 2006. In 2006, my older brother was deployed to Iraq for nearly 12 months. My brother and I used to always butt heads as he was older and would always pick on me, so we were not as close when I was young. Although he was a pain, I still really missed him when he was gone. I remember eagerly and impatiently waiting to receive letters from him in the mail. In his letters, he wrote that once he got back he was going to take me out hunting on my first hunting trip. I really could have cared less about hunting, but I was looking forward to the hunting trip because it meant spending time with him. That hunting trip is when my brother and I first really bonded. Ever since hunting and the outdoors have occupied a special place in my heart, and I love introducing it to new people and especially to fellow Service Members new to the sport.

A major reason I ended choosing to go to school in North Dakota, was not only because of the great education but also because of the resident hunting/fishing season length and prices available for non-resident students attending a North Dakota higher education institution. I cannot say enough great things about this program. This program helped me and many others make so many lifelong friends while at college. Thanks to this program we could all go out and bond and get to know each other better on a waterfowl or pheasant trip together, without the cost barrier and license length limitations and keeping us from going. I believe a similar program for North Dakota National Guard members would have an extremely positive impact on the readiness, *esprit de corps*, and health and well-being of the North Dakota National Guard and its members.

While serving in the Minnesota National Guard I witnessed first-hand the beneficial impact Minnesota legislation had regarding actively drilling Service Members of the National Guard and hunting privileges for non-resident Service Members. In Minnesota, active members of the Minnesota National Guard can purchase Minnesota hunting and fishing licenses at the Minnesota resident rate and with the same valid license period, regardless of residency. This was beneficial because a major way to integrate into the unit and spend time together was for Service Members to get together and out hunting or fishing to know each other better. This was especially beneficial

as a border state unit where we had many Soldiers that were residents of North Dakota apart of the unit. The North Dakota Soldiers were able to be welcomed into the unit hunting and fishing get-togethers without the higher cost of hunting/fishing licenses holding them back, especially for the often cash-strapped younger Soldiers. Additionally, I believe this helped with Service Member suicides as they were feeling included and able to participate with their fellow soldiers. It was great seeing non-resident Soldiers seeing that they too were appreciated by the state they have sworn to protect and serve. Lastly, Minnesota is not the only state to have implemented this sort of legislation. Washington State also has a similar program.

I believe a similar program in North Dakota would reap numerous positive benefits from legislation that would allow active North Dakota Guard Service Members to purchase hunting and fishing licenses with the resident license periods and pricing. This would help integrate non-resident Service Members into the North Dakota National Guard and support building strong, close, cohesive bonds between the soldiers in a Unit. Which in turn supports military readiness. Further, this would be a great recruiting and retention incentive for the North Dakota National Guard. Additionally, this would help to lower suicide rates among Service Members because Service Members will not feel isolated, unappreciated, and unable to participate (due to cost and shorter licensing periods) in a great North Dakota pastime with their fellow soldiers in a state they have sworn to protect and serve.

In sum, I believe that resident pricing and license periods for actively serving North Dakota National Guard Service Members would be a beneficial and positive program in the Great State of North Dakota.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Erickson", written in a cursive style.

Jason Erickson

My name is Ron Kill, I am a resident of Lidgerwood, ND. I am writing to express my support for legislation HB 1178 regarding hunting licenses for non-resident members of the North Dakota National Guard.

I served for 25 years, active duty in the United States Air Force. I transferred to 12 different bases in my career. The one constant my family and I had, was that we could enjoy the outdoors/hunting sports wherever we were stationed. This gave us a sense of stability in our new surroundings. I was surprised to find out that as military friendly North Dakota is, that our men and women in the North Dakota Guard, that are non-residents but serve in the ND Guard must pay non-resident rates for hunting and fishing licenses. Currently non-resident college students can purchase resident rate licenses. Why; are not the brave men and women serving our states armed forces afforded the same? I know in Minnesota actively drilling members of the MN National Guard can purchase MN hunting and fishing licenses at resident rate regardless of residency status.

I can tell you from my experience, that a sense of comradery is best forged from military members interacting not only on duty, but off duty as well. Hunting and fishing are great ways for members to bond together with a common interest. National Guard units members are commonly spread throughout the state and even country. To coordinate a group activity away from military orders would be challenging under normal circumstances, now coupled with a high non-resident license fee and it has made it certainly fiscally unfeasible. North Dakota has some of the best hunting and fishing in the midwest. These activities are a great way to relieve stress and are outlets to calm the minds of military members that suffer from PTSD. (I can testify to this fact personally). The members of the North Dakota Guard are who we are going to call upon in time of emergency to protect our families, regardless of which state they reside in, it is the state North Dakota that these brave men and women choose to serve. They protect our families, so we should treat them as family.

Respectfully,

Ronald Kill

2021 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Energy and Natural Resources Committee Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

HB 1178
1/29/2021

Relating to hunting licenses for nonresident members of the armed forces
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9:12 AM

Chairman Porter opened the hearing on HB 1178.

Present: Representatives Porter, Damschen, Bosch, Devlin, Heinert, Lefor, Marschall, Roers Jones, M Ruby, Zubke, Guggisberg, and Ista. Absent: Representatives Anderson and Keiser.

Discussion Topics:

- Airman and military not excluded from the lottery
- Many times they're keeping residency in other states

Rep. Ruby moved a Do Not Pass, seconded by Rep Zubke.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Todd Porter	Y
Representative Chuck Damschen	Y
Representative Dick Anderson	AB
Representative Glenn Bosch	Y
Representative Bill Devlin	Y
Representative Ron Guggisberg	Y
Representative Pat D. Heinert	Y
Representative Zachary Ista	Y
Representative George Keiser	AB
Representative Mike Lefor	Y
Representative Andrew Marschall	Y
Representative Shannon Roers Jones	Y
Representative Matthew Ruby	Y
Representative Denton Zubke	Y

Motion carried. 12-0-2. Rep. Ruby is carrier.

Closed the hearing 9:14 AM

Kathleen Davis, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1178: Energy and Natural Resources Committee (Rep. Porter, Chairman)
recommends **DO NOT PASS** (12 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 2 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING).
HB 1178 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.