

2021 SENATE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

SB 2184

2021 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Energy and Natural Resources Committee Peace Garden Room, State Capitol

SB 2184 AM
1/21/2021

A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 20.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to big game hunting licenses for hunter education volunteer

Chairman Kreun called the hearing to order (10:46am). Senators Patten, Piepkorn, J. Roers, Kreun, Bell, and Schaible are all present

Discussion Topics:

- Impact this Bill would have on the hunting lottery
- Shortfalls in hunting instructors
- Rewards the volunteer core already receives
- Existing tag numbers and shortages

Senator Oley Larsen, District 3, introduced SB 2184, and testified in favor (10:46am).

Steve Bratlien, a Tioga resident, testified in favor (10:54am).

Scott Peterson, ND Game and Fish Department Deputy Director, testified opposed #1737 (11:00am).

Curt Decker, a Dickinson resident, testified opposed (11:07am).

John Bradley, ND Wildlife Federation, testified opposed #2088 (11:13am).

Additional written testimony:

Senator Richard Marcellais, District 9, testified in favor #1273

Mike McEnroe, ND Hunting Instructor, testified opposed #2049

Chairman Kreun closed the hearing on at 11:18am

Dave Owen, Committee Clerk



Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
Testimony on SB 2184

North Dakota Game and Fish Department
Scott Peterson, Deputy Directory
January 21, 2021

Chairman Kreun and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, my name is Scott Peterson; I serve as the Deputy Director for the North Dakota Game and Fish Department (Department). I am testifying today in opposition of SB 2184.

North Dakota state law (N.D.C.C. 20.1-03-01.1) directs the Game and Fish Department director to "... select, train, and certify persons or department personnel qualified to provide instruction on, firearms and bow safety...". In addition to Department staff, Game and Fish enlists over 800 volunteer instructors to help deliver North Dakota's Hunter Education program.

In addition to Hunter Education instructors, the Department also enrolls over 100 more volunteer instructors for its other education programs:

- Hooked on Fishing
- Fur Harvester Education
- Archery Instruction
- Boat and Water Safety
- Conservation Education

All these volunteer instructors serve as agents for the Department, assisting in carrying out its programs and mission. Their motivation is that of service to agency and the citizens of the state. In recognition for their dedicated and valued service in delivering this program, the Department has a long-standing policy of providing special recognition and incentives to those instructors who have reached specific benchmarks of volunteer years and hours of instruction:

- 2 years + 50 hrs = Vest
- 5 years + 125 hrs = Jacket
- 10 years + 250 hrs = Plaque
- 15 years + 375 hrs = Knife
- 20 years + 500 hrs = Binoculars
- 25 years + 625 hrs = Gun
- 30 years + 750 hrs = Lifetime Hunting and Fishing License (N.D.C.C. 20.1-02-05(25))

It is our opinion that the provisions provided in this bill have numerous unintended consequences:

1. Recognizes and rewards only one category of our volunteer instructor corps
2. Would attract volunteers for the wrong reasons and motives
3. Will result in a flood of volunteers; more than we have a need for
4. Will significantly reduce other deer license applicant's chances and opportunity for highly valued and sought-after antlered deer licenses
5. Will eliminate or nearly eliminate other applicant's chances for once-in-a-lifetime trophy species (moose, elk, or bighorn sheep)
6. By reducing license opportunities for new hunters, it runs counter to the Department's R3 - Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation efforts

And finally, for perspective, in 2020, we had 403 moose tags, 445 elk tags, and 5 bighorn sheep tags available to the general public. Once you remove approximately 800 tags from that pool for certified hunter education instructors, you can see that very few tags would be made available to the general public. I would speculate that this would not be widely supported by that segment of the hunting population.

For these reasons, the North Dakota Game and Fish Department respectfully requests a DO NOT PASS vote on SB 2184.



NORTH DAKOTA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

TESTIMONY OF JOHN BRADLEY NORTH DAKOTA WILDLIFE FEDERATION SENATE BILL 2184 SENATE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCE COMMITTEE JANUARY 21, 2021

Chairman Kreun, members of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee:

For the record, I am John Bradley, Executive Director of the North Dakota Wildlife Federation. I am writing today representing our 1,500 members and 15 affiliated wildlife and sportsmen's club across North Dakota, including the North Dakota Hunters Education Association.

NDWF rises in opposition to SB 2184. While we agree with the intent of SB 2184 to recognize and appreciate North Dakota's hunter education instructors, we oppose the bill for numerous reasons. The first reason is that our hunter education instructors are volunteers, who teach hunter's ed to pass on our outdoor heritage, not because they might get rewarded with a big game license.

Secondly, the resource would be extremely burdened trying to support the any legal deer or one of the big three licenses (elk, moose, bighorn sheep) after 5 years that is provided in this bill. North Dakota has hundreds of hunter education instructors, providing licenses to them would cut into the general public's opportunity to hunt deer, moose, elk, and bighorn in North Dakota and be a revenue loss to the Department.

We thank all the hunter education instructors for volunteering their time and energy. We believe there are better ways to say thank you than SB 2184. We urge a do not pass on SB 2184.

I will stand for any questions that the committee may have. Thank you.

NORTH DAKOTA SENATE



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Senator Richard Marcellais

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COMMITTEES:

Education
Government and Veterans Affairs

SB 2184 Testimony

Senate Energy & Natural Resources

January 21, 2021 @ 10:45 am

Peace Garden Room

Good morning Chairman Kreun members of the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee for the record my name is Senator Richard Marcellais, District 9, Rolette County.

I appear before you this morning in favor of SB 2184 relating to big game hunting licenses for hunter education volunteer instructors.

I will try an answer any questions.

TESTIMONY OF MIKE McENROE
SENATE BILL 2184
SENATE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMITTEE
JANUARY 21, 2021

Chairman Kreun and members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Mike McEnroe and I have been a North Dakota Hunter Education instructor for 29 years. I am not providing testimony on behalf of the 700-800 Hunter Education instructors in the state, only commenting as one of them.

I am opposed to SB 2184 which would provide the opportunities for Hunter Education volunteers/instructors to receive licenses to hunt any legal deer for teaching in the previous year, or a license to hunt bighorn sheep, elk, or moose after teaching for each of the preceding five years.

Hunter education instructors volunteer because they want to teach and mentor our youth and older beginning hunters about the importance of hunting in our North Dakota way of life, the need for all hunters to be responsible and hunt and act safely, and to continue to support hunting and wildlife habitat programs in the State. We do not volunteer in order to receive license preferences.

Last year the Game and Fish Department issued approximately 523 elk licenses, 474 moose license, and 6 bighorn sheep licenses (License numbers from ND Outdoors magazine). With between 700 and 800 Hunter Education volunteer instructors in the State, that number of licenses allocated by SB 2184 would overwhelm the lottery system for allocating elk, moose, and bighorn licenses and out-compete other hunters for the most preferred or sought-after deer licenses, such as mule

deer buck tags in the Badlands or buck tags in almost any unit in the State.

The preferential treatment for awarding deer, elk, moose, and bighorn sheep licenses proposed in SB 2184 is not sustainable.

I respectfully ask that SB 2184 receive a “Do Not Pass” recommendation from the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

Mike McEnroe
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2021 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Energy and Natural Resources Committee Peace Garden Room, State Capitol

SB 2184
1/21/2021 PM

A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 20.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to big game hunting licenses for hunter education volunteer instructors.

Chairman Kreun called the committee to order at 2:50pm.
Senators Piepkorn, Patten, J. Roers, Kreun, Bell, and Schaible

Discussion Topics:

- Refresher of what the bill did

Senator Roers motioned DO NOT PASS (2:51pm)
Senator Piepkorn seconded DO NOT PASS (2:51pm)

DO NOT PASS	Vote
Senator Curt Kreun	Y
Senator Jim P. Roers	Y
Senator Dale Patten	Y
Senator Merrill Piepkorn	Y
Senator Donald Schaible	Y
Senator Jessica Unruh Bell	Y

Motion passed 6-0-0
Senator Piepkorn will carry

Chairman Kreun adjourned the hearing at 2:52pm

Dave Owen, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2184: Energy and Natural Resources Committee (Sen. Kreun, Chairman)
recommends **DO NOT PASS** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB
2184 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.