

**The Ohio House of Representatives  
Energy & Natural Resources Committee  
March 20, 2018**

**Proponent Testimony House Bill 518**

**Chris Skrant & Melissa Skrant, Flyway Outdoors**

Chairman Landis, and members of the committee, thank you for your time. My name is Chris Skrant, this is my wife Melissa Skrant, and we're here in support of House Bill 518.

I am a lifelong hunter and began working as a hunting guide in 1995 in Wyoming in the John D. Rockefeller Parkway. In all, I have served the hunting community as a professional guide for 13 years in the states of Wyoming, Montana, Pennsylvania, and our great state of Ohio.

In 2008 we opened Flyway Outdoors, our guide service based out of Medina County. While our name reflects our beginnings as a waterfowl guide service we have also branched out to offer whitetail deer, turkey, dove, and predator hunts, in the last 4 years.

We have clients that have joined us from Texas, Louisiana, Georgia, Alabama, Michigan, North and South Carolina, Canada, Greece, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon; ladies and gentlemen that is why we are here. We are here to support a bill that provides more licensing options, and will improve the services provided by the Ohio Division of Wildlife, not just to those who reside here, but to those who choose Ohio to spend their time and money hunting in our state.

We need to remove any obstacle, in our power, that restricts people from joining us whether they are an avid hunter or this is their first experience. One of the most commonly experienced issue we have dealt with involves clients trying to purchase their Federal Waterfowl Stamp and they are told by the associate of the licensing agent that "no such thing exists". With this bill, the Ohio Division of Wildlife might be able to create a waterfowl package, streamlining the whole purchase process for all involved and eliminate incidents such as this, and other license options.

This bill also proposes the addition of multi year and lifetime licensing opportunities. The flexibility in options available helps to remove obstacles that frankly, are unnecessary in this age of smartphones- it should not be easier to become a professional hunting guide than it is to buy all the appropriate licensing and stamps necessary for a day in the fields.

Before I close, I also wanted to speak in regards to the issue of allowing disabled hunters to use ATVS to get out in the field. Hunting is a passion that brings people of all abilities, backgrounds, and experiences together. We have numerous veterans who choose to hunt with us because of the accessibility of our properties, many times these veterans are in their present condition as a direct result of their service to this country. Don't they deserve the opportunity to go hunting again with their dad, their brother, their son, or daughter? These all electric vehicles are not affordable for most people, but many people have access to an ATV. With licensing purchases reflecting a 14% drop in the last 8 years it seems adding an obstacle for those interested in participating would be counterproductive to what we are trying to accomplish.

I want to thank Representative Dever and Representative Cera for introducing this legislation. I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to testify before you today, and I am happy to try to answer any questions you or the members of the committee may have for me.