

May 19, 2015

The Honorable Senator Joe Uecker, Chair, Finance Subcommittee

Subject: House Bill 64 - Main Operating Budget FY2016-FY2017

As operators of a hunting preserve and pheasant hatchery in Ohio and as hunter education instructors, both my husband and I support the proposed non-resident fee increase as proposed by the ODNR Division of Wildlife and contained in House Bill 64.

Ohio is a premium white tail destination provides great hunting opportunities for residents and non-residents alike. Ohio hunters pay considerably more when they travel to other states, for lower quality deer. Allowing a modest increase in the non-resident licenses will help maintain reasonable hunting license rates for Ohio residents.

The non-resident increase will also allow Ohio to receive more funding through the federal fish and wildlife restoration funds, which come from taxes on firearms, ammunition, archery supplies and fishing gear. Currently, these funds are at an all-time high. Ohio, however is limited in what it can receive based on its ability to match these dollars with license fee funds. Without an increase, these taxes, paid by Ohio sportsmen and women, will instead be distributed to other states.

These funds are used to build shooting ranges, improve habitat, and other enhancements that result in abundant wildlife and quality hunting. It's a win-win proposal that helps keep resident fees low, while ensuring that Ohio receives its share of revenues paid in by its citizens.

As owners of businesses that exist due to hunting, and as hunter education instructors doing what we can to bring money into the department through Pittman-Robertson funds, we ask for your support of the non-resident increase.

Sincerely,

Peg and Sam Ballou



Elkhorn Lake Hunt Club, Inc.

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