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**Testimony before the Ohio Natural Resources Committee February 19, 2025 on H.B. 64
Senior Sportsmen Fairness Act**

Chair Jones, Vice Chair Robb Blasdel, Ranking Member Rogers, and members of the House Natural Resource Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Rep. Deeter and my Senior Sportsmen Fairness Act, HB 64. Rep. Deeter is currently testifying and is unable to join us this morning.

HB 64 is a pretty straightforward one. On my first day in office, I had a message from a constituent named Gary who shared he was all excited when he turned 65 to get a discount on his hunting and fishing license because he thought, as do most Ohioans I believe, that 65 is when those types of discounts get enacted. Well, it turns out much to his disappointment, that in Ohio it is age 66 when those senior discounts get applied. He didn't think that was right and frankly, I agreed and told him I'll work to fix that. So here we are.

Ohio Revised Code includes 9 discounts for seniors to receive benefits. 8 of them are for residents 65 and younger, and this license discount is the only one age 66 and above. In research, the 66 age came about in 1913. Now, why age 66 in 1913? Especially when the average life expectancy was 54 years old in the United States? I'm not sure. My only guess is those who turned 66 if they were lucky in 1913 would have been born in 1847 and would have likely been the last remaining Civil War veterans. The equivalent today would be 90 years old.

The age 66 to my knowledge had not been questioned for the past 112 years until Gary messaged me on New Years to ask why. I'm a firm believer if you don't have an answer for a policy, you change the policy to fit the question. The senior discount is not earth shattering for folks as the discount for fishing licenses lowers the traditional \$25 resident license to \$10 for seniors and hunting discount lowers the regular adult cost from \$19 to \$10. And one additional year of qualifications will not break any bank.

However, the idea of encouraging our seniors to be outside, bring their grandkids along to enjoy the great outdoors, and provide a little awareness and incentive around this concept I believe is well worth our time today.

With that, I urge support for this legislation and am happy to answer any questions the committee may have.