



Senator Steve Huffman
5th District
Senate General Government Committee
November 4th, 2025
Senate Joint Resolution 8

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Blackshear, and fellow members of the Senate General Government Committee, I am grateful to provide sponsor testimony today on Senate Joint Resolution 8.

S.J.R. 8 would enact Section 23 of Article I of the Constitution of the State of Ohio to establish a constitutional right to hunt and fish. If the General Assembly approves it, the measure will appear on the November 2026 general election ballot for Ohio voters to decide.

Hunting and fishing are core parts of Ohio's heritage and economy, contributing more than \$1.9 billion annually, and supporting 12,000 jobs just last year. These activities are particularly important in Appalachian counties, where hunting drives local economies; seven of the top ten counties for deer harvest in 2024-25 were in that region, and several are designated as at-risk by the Appalachian Regional Commission.

Hunting and fishing also attract visitors from across the nation. Last season, hunters from all 50 states bought nonresident licenses, including nearly 8,000 from Pennsylvania. Since 1996, 23 states have amended their constitutions to protect the right to hunt and fish, most recently Florida in 2024, where voters approved the measure with 67% support. These states are following the lead of Vermont, who in 1777, enshrined the right to hunt and fish in their state constitution.

This legislation will preserve the future of hunting in our state and ensure that hunting and fishing are the preferred methods for controlling wildlife in Ohio. These legal protections have proven valuable as states confront rising anti-hunting efforts and costly legal challenges. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony to you today, I am happy to answer any questions you may have.