

Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chairman Huffman, Ranking Member Fedor, and members of the Senate Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Joint Resolution 3.

My name is Don Hancock. I am a retired Ariel Map Compiler and presently the Vice President of the Ashtabula County Wildlife Conservation League. I was born and raised in Sharon Pennsylvania and moved to Painesville Ohio in 1966. As a young boy growing up in Pennsylvania I was fortunate enough to have a father who took me hunting and fishing, creating many great memories.

Early on my father taught me that hunting and fishing weren't just about getting a big deer, a few rabbits or limiting out on brook trout. It was much more than that. As a child I learned to appreciate a quiet day in the woods or on the water learning about the many varied species of fish and wildlife. I also learned to respect and obey our hunting and fishing regulations as well as the officers that administered them.

Fast forward several years to a time when my own children were growing up. I did my best to pass that same heritage and traditions on to them. When the time came to enroll them in an Ohio Hunter Safety course, I found that class sizes were exceptionally large due to the limited number of instructors available. This situation encouraged me to eventually attend a Division of Wildlife instructor certification course. I am now in my 11<sup>th</sup> year as a certified volunteer hunter education instructor for the Ohio Division of Wildlife. I firmly believe that it was the ethics that I learned while hunting and fishing with my dad that inspired me to take on this volunteer position.

Again fast forward. I am now at the age where I am taking my grandchildren hunting and fishing with me. I, as many are, am concerned that future generations could be denied the benefits and the enjoyment that comes with hunting, fishing, and harvesting wild animals. For that reason I feel that this privilege should be protected by an amendment to the Ohio State constitution.

I would like to share just one example of how hunting and fishing also benefits those that neither hunt nor fish. Bird watching is extremely popular at both Pymatuning Lake and Mosquito Lake State Parks in Northeast Ohio. Largely due to the growing numbers of bald eagles in these areas. Fifty years ago, a bald eagle sighting was a rare occurrence in Ohio. They are now a common sight due to the efforts of the Ohio Division of Wildlife. So where does the Division of Wildlife get a large part of the funding that make projects like this possible? From the sale of hunting and fishing licenses.

In closing, Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chairman Huffman, Ranking Member Fedor, and members of the Senate Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Joint Resolution 3. I will now open the floor to any questions you may have.