



November 13, 2023

Representative Darrell Kick  
Chairman, Energy and Natural Resources Committee  
Ohio House of Representatives  
77 South High Street, Floor 11  
Columbus, OH 43215

**Re:** House Joint Resolution 5; Establishing Constitutional Right to Hunt and Fish  
**Position:** Support with Amendment

---

Dear Chairman Kick and Members of the Committee,

We respectfully encourage you to support House Joint Resolution 5 which proposes to enact Section 22 of Article I of the Constitution of the State of Ohio to establish a constitutional right to hunt and fish as a public right in perpetuity. Constitutionally safeguarding the right to hunt, fish, and take fish and wildlife is critical to the future of Ohio's outdoor heritage, and we appreciate the opportunity to provide input as you consider this important legislation that would enable Ohio to become the 24<sup>th</sup> state to constitutionally guarantee the right to hunt and fish.

Founded in 1989, the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF) is the informed authority across outdoor issues and serves as the primary conduit for influencing public policy. Working with the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus (CSC), the Governors Sportsmen's Caucus (GSC), and the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses (NASC), CSF gives a voice to hunters, anglers, recreational shooters, and trappers on Capitol Hill and throughout state capitols advocating on vital outdoor issues that are the backbone of our nation's conservation legacy.

CSF supports HJR 5 with the following language removed from paragraph B in Section 22: "that are traditionally pursued." We recommend this amendment based on our extensive experience working to pass right to hunt and fish constitutional amendments in states across the country and coordinating with the respective state fish and wildlife agencies throughout the process. Removing this language will protect the fish and wildlife management authority of the Department of Natural Resources by allowing the full range of management options currently employed, including the ability to manage additional species through hunting should it be necessary to maintain ecosystem balance and health.

HJR 5, if passed by the legislature, would present voters in the November 2024 elections with the option to vote for a state constitutional amendment that would protect the right to hunt, fish, and harvest wildlife. CSF, along with other conservation organizations, has supported right to hunt and fish initiatives across the country to ensure that future generations of sportsmen and women can continue to hunt, fish, and harvest

---

### **Your Inside Connection to Outdoor Legislation**

---

wildlife. Sportsmen and women are the primary funders of state-based conservation, contribute significantly to the economy, and facilitate youth introduction to and appreciation of the outdoors.

State conservation programs for fish and wildlife management, habitat enhancements, and access improvements to public lands and waters are funded largely by sportsmen and women. In 2021 alone, for example, Ohio's sportsmen and women contributed \$59.73 million to conservation funding through the purchase of hunting and fishing licenses and sporting-related equipment. Economic contributions related to hunting and fishing are also important as the more than 1.56 million sportsmen and women in Ohio are a significant economic force spending more than \$2.75 billion, supporting more than 46,000 jobs, and generating more than \$301 million in state and local taxes. As you consider HJR 5, we ask you to please take into account the vital importance of protecting Ohio's outdoor heritage to the conservation programs and the economy of Ohio.

23 states, including adjacent states Kentucky and Indiana, have amended their state constitution to protect the right to hunt and fish. Additionally, the Florida Legislature passed a right to hunt, fish, and harvest wildlife constitutional amendment resolution earlier this year, and Floridians will vote on the amendment in November 2024. We respectfully encourage you to support HJR 5 to give Ohioans the opportunity to constitutionally protect the right to hunt, fish, and harvest wildlife in the Buckeye State as well.

Attached for reference is our issue brief on Right to Hunt, Fish and Harvest Wildlife. Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,



**Robert Matthews**

Senior Coordinator, Great Lakes States  
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation  
[rmatthews@congressionalsportsmen.org](mailto:rmatthews@congressionalsportsmen.org)

---

**Your Inside Connection to Outdoor Legislation**

# AMERICAN SYSTEM OF CONSERVATION FUNDING



## OHIO

	Hunting licenses	Fishing licenses	Pittman-Robertson	Dingell-Johnson	TOTAL
2021 Funding	\$22.78 M	\$15.30 M	\$13.50 M	\$8.13 M	\$59.73 M
2021 National Ranking	14th	16th	21st	20th	21st
Historical Funding Total	\$652.5 M	\$566.6 M	\$296.9 M	\$236.1 M	\$1.75 B
Historical Funding U.S. Rank	16th	11th	17th	14th	15

**2021 PAID LICENSE HOLDERS**  
1,150,997

**2021 TOTAL LICENSE PERMITS/TAGS**  
1,705,007

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN'S ROLE IN CONSERVATION FUNDING VISIT [CONGRESSIONALSPOUTSMEN.ORG](http://CONGRESSIONALSPOUTSMEN.ORG)