



Attn: House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources Finance & Policy
Re: House File 276 – Reimbursement for Discounted Senior Fishing Licenses
Date: February 20, 2025
Position: Support

Honorable Members of the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources Finance & Policy,

I write to you today on behalf of the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF) in support of House File 276, which will preserve the integrity of the "user pays – public benefits" American System of Conservation Funding (ASCF) while simultaneously offering well-deserved financial benefits and fishing opportunities to senior Minnesotans.

Founded in 1989, the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation 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.

Funded by the sale of hunting and fishing licenses and permits, along with revenue generated from self-imposed excise taxes through the Pittman-Robertson Act and Dingell-Johnson Act with Wallop-Breaux Amendments, the ASCF serves as the primary source of revenue for the Minnesota Division of Fish and Wildlife. While the implications of discounting or outright waiving license fees are obvious, what is less known is the impact of license exemptions on the ability of the Division to fully claim its portion of revenue made available through the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration (Pittman-Robertson) Act. In making apportionments of this funding, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service uses a formula¹ that, in part, considers the number of eligible hunting and fishing licenses sold. To be counted, licenses not only need to be required, but must also result in revenue collected by the state fish and wildlife management agency. In turn, each certified hunting license results in, approximately, an additional \$26 and each fishing license brings in \$10 of federal aid.²

Not only does CSF appreciate and support efforts that promote angling participation among seniors, but we also support doing so while ensuring that the Division of Fish and Wildlife – which is charged with managing those resources – continues to capture revenue from both state and federal sources to carry out

¹ Congressional Research Service. April 5, 2019. Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act: Understanding Apportionments for States and Territories. Accessed: February 19, 2025. <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/R45667.pdf>

² Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation. 2023. Reimbursement to Fish and Wildlife Agencies for Free and Discounted Licenses. Accessed: February 19, 2025. <https://congressionalsportsmen.org/policy/reimbursement-to-fish-and-wildlife-agencies-for-free-and-discounted-licenses/>

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their critical responsibilities. For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Honorable Members of this Committee support the passage of HF 276 and welcome any questions that you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert A. Matthews". The signature is written in a cursive style with a clear, legible font.

Robert Matthews

Assistant Manager, Midwestern States

Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation

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