



State Representative

Warren Petryk

93RD ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Date: July 17, 2013

To: Members of the Committee on Natural Resources and Sporting Heritage

From: Representative Petryk

Re: Assembly Bill 199/ Senate Bill 178

Good morning Chairman Ott and members of the Committee. I appreciate having this opportunity to come before you today to testify in favor of Assembly Bill (AB) 199/ Senate Bill (SB) 178. This legislation is an opportunity for Wisconsin to demonstrate our collective appreciation for those service men and women who were awarded a Purple Heart for the injuries they received while serving our country.

Along with Senator Petrowski, I worked closely with the Department of Natural Resources and a leader in the veteran's community to develop this legislation. AB 199/ SB 178 seeks to provide therapy and healing opportunities for Purple Heart combat wounded veterans by encouraging them to get active in our state's great outdoors. At this time, Wisconsin has nearly 1,900 Purple Heart recipients who reside in the state and could benefit from this legislation. This legislation had a hearing in the Senate on June 6, 2013 and passed out of the committee by a vote of 5 to 0.

AB 199/ SB 178 would provide a conservation patron license, which confers a number of hunting, fishing, and trapping approvals, for the reduced cost of \$10 per year for a state resident who has received a Purple Heart. Non-residents, who are recipients of a Purple Heart, would also be able to receive various hunting, fishing, and trapping approvals at the lower resident rates in the same way that active duty members of the military receive reduced rates.

Also, AB 199/ SB 178 would supplement the efforts of veterans organizations like the Wounded Warriors in Action Foundation who serve to assist and provide recreational and healing opportunities to Wisconsin's military heroes by lowering the cost for individuals who wish to participate. Furthermore, this legislation will help to promote our state's natural resources and attract Purple Heart recipients from Wisconsin and other states to purchase a conservation patron license at the reduced rate while boosting our state's tourism industry.

There is a technical amendment to this bill. The amendment will remove the delayed effective date of the legislation. The Department of Natural Resources has given us their blessing to do so as they have already been working on the implementation of this legislation. The hope is to have this legislation passed in time for the fall hunting season.

The fiscal estimate prepared by the Department of Natural Resources indicates an increase in costs for the Department but they should be able to absorb any cost increases.

Thank you again for hearing this bill today!