



GAE MAGNAFICI

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 28th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Testimony in Favor of AB 29

Good Morning,

Chairman Pronschinske and members of the Committee on Sporting Heritage. Thank you for holding a hearing on Assembly Bill 29 which corrects how certain bear tags are distributed.

Under current law, the DNR is required to issue two bear hunting tags to the Wisconsin Bear Hunters' Association. One tag is auctioned, and the other is sold in a raffle.

The issue at hand is the limitation put on these tags, where a bear hunter is only allowed to win once per lifetime. This substantially impacts a major revenue source for this organization which provides scholarships, awards for landowners, and hunting advocacy.

At some point, there will be fewer and fewer hunters to compete for these tags due solely to the "once-in-a-lifetime" rule. Assembly Bill 29 corrects a simple oversight, but will have a substantial and positive impact on the community.

Thank you, and I'm happy to answer any questions.



PATRICK TESTIN

STATE SENATOR

DATE: February 10th, 2021

RE: **Testimony on 2021 Assembly Bill 29**

TO: The Assembly Committee on Sporting Heritage

FROM: Senator Patrick Testin

Thank you to Chairman Pronschinske and members of the committee for accepting my testimony on Assembly Bill 29 (AB 29).

Current law stipulates that the DNR must issue two certificates for Class A bear hunting licenses to the Wisconsin Bear Hunters' Association, Inc. One certificate is awarded to the winner of a raffle, and the other goes to the highest bidder at a public auction. Currently, an individual may only win one auction in a lifetime.

Stakeholders have indicated that the bidding on this certificate generally only attracts a small pool of dedicated individuals, and preventing previous winners from participating only artificially deflates the value of the certificates. AB 29 enables bidders to potentially win the certificate more than one time, and likely increases proceeds from the sale, likely increasing the amount of money that will be distributed to charity.

Please join me in supporting this legislation.

Re: Support of Assembly Bill #29

My name is Joe Trumble and I live in Cushing, Wisconsin. Thank you for allowing me to testify today in favor of Assembly Bill #29. I ask that you pass my support of eliminating limits on transfer tags through to your committee. I do not agree with the rule of one transfer in a person's lifetime. Since the start of the transfer program, any youth, disabled, active military, Purple Heart recipient, or Governor's tag recipient that has received a Class A hunting license, whether they were successful or not, is ineligible for another tag transfer the rest of their lives. In hunting, there are no guarantees.

I am the father of three daughters, who all hunted as youth, and have 9 grandchildren that have also hunted with me through the years. Three of my granddaughters have been granted transfer tags, but only two were successful in their hunts. I believe that we should encourage youth in hunting and elimination of transfer tag limits for all categories would help promote youth participation in bear hunting.

I am a lifetime member of the Wisconsin Bear Hunters' Association (WBHA) and currently on the Board of Directors for the organization. As a member, I have advocated for youth to receive bear preference points by eliminating age restrictions in drawing a bear tag. The WBHA became aware of the Governor's Tag transfer limit issue a couple years ago and has been working with various wildlife committees to rectify the situation. The WBHA works tirelessly through raffles and auctions to support youth programs in our sport, to promote state-wide outdoor activity programs for kids, and to provide college scholarships for WBHA youth members. Eliminating the Governor's tag transfer limit will help youth in our sport, but elimination of the transfer limit on all the eligible categories would be even more beneficial.

I ask you to please consider the rule change to open up more hunting opportunities for all, especially the youth. They are our future in this sport. I have always been a strong advocate for youth, and this rule greatly affects them. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Joe Trumble
trumbles.bearcatcamp@yahoo.com
715-557-0634

Thank you for allowing me to testify today in favor of Assembly Bill #29. I ask that you pass this through your committee. My name is Eric Tuckner, and I reside in New Richmond, Wisconsin. I am the father of two young daughters, who are 11 and 5 years old. I am currently on the Board of Directors for the Wisconsin Bear Hunters' Association and the Vice President of the Wisconsin Bear Hunters' Foundation.

We began working on this issue a couple years ago when the problem was brought to our attention. Under current law, the only people eligible to have a Class A harvest tag transferred to them are:

- Youth under age 18 at the time of transfer and has not previously received a transfer.
- Person with Disabilities that has not previously received a transfer tag.
- Active Duty Military member that has not previously received a transfer tag.
- Purple Heart Recipient that has not received a previously transferred tag.

The Wisconsin Bear Hunters' Association receives 2 certificates referred to as the Governor's Tag for a Class A bear hunting license. One certificate is raffled off every year and one is auctioned off every year. The money raised through the raffle and auction is used to support programs for the youth in our sport. Every year the WBHA awards 12 recipients college scholarships. This money also supports youth programs, like the Richardson Sportsman Club Youth day event, where 75-100 youth are introduced to the outdoors. They have fishing, shooting, archery, bird house building, and other outdoor activities, along with exhibitors. Most of them would not have the opportunity to experience those things. It also opens the eyes of their parents, a lot of them may have never experienced these activities either. I have also taken part in the Hunt of a Lifetime hunt partnered with the Wisconsin DNR that allows disabled or ill youth to harvest a bear. Funds raised from the Governor's tag help support these programs as well.

I do not agree with the rule of one transfer in a person's lifetime. Since the start of the transfer program any youth, disabled, active military, Purple Heart recipient, or Governor's tag recipient that has received a class A hunting license, whether they were successful or not, is ineligible for another tag transfer the rest of their lives. In hunting, there are no guarantees. That is why most of us do it - to enjoy the challenge. That said, I ask you to please consider the rule change to open up more hunting opportunities for all, especially the youth. They are our future in this sport. I have always been a strong advocate for youth, and this rule greatly affects them. Thank You for your time.

Sincerely,

Eric Tuckner
ectuckner@frontiernet.net
651.775.7296