



Robert Bohmann, Chair
1105 Melvin Avenue
Racine, WI 53402
262-498-4605

Larry Bonde, Vice-Chair
12211 Marken Road
Kiel, WI 53042
920-693-8449

Lee Fahrney, Secretary
7860 McKenna Road
Hollandale, WI 53544
608-967-2208

Tuesday, October 11, 2011

The Honorable Jeffery Mursau
Chair, Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Room 18 North, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53708

RE: Assembly Bill 311 relating to Wisconsin's sporting heritage

Dear Chair Mursau and members of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee:

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress would like to express our support for Assembly Bill 311 relating to efforts to continue Wisconsin's sporting heritage and encourage participation and opportunities for hunting, fishing, and trapping. The Congress would also like to thank the authors of this bill for your interest in this issue and for allowing the Congress a seat at the table to discuss these possible solutions.

The Congress recognizes that our most prominent conservationist, such as Roosevelt, Leopold, and Muir, were first and foremost hunters, who's land conservation ethic is the basis for our modern day conservation efforts. Today's sporting public carries on the conservation land ethic and continues to be the primary supporter (both financially and physically) of today's conservation efforts. The Congress understands the need to keep our sporting heritage strong to support and continue the conservation ethic.

Many of the items in this bill are ideas that the Congress has supported for years, and we are encouraged to see action being taken to continue Wisconsin's great hunting, fishing, and trapping heritage. We know from previous spring hearing votes, that ideas such as the free winter fishing weekend and the use of Stewardship funds on properties that are open to the five nature based activities, also have the statewide support of the public.

Yesterday, the Congress Executive Committee voted unanimously to support the efforts of this bill. While there are a few areas of the bill that we would like to see clarification and continued discussion, we look forward to continuing our conversations with the authors to work out some details and develop a bill that will ensure the continuation of our strong sporting heritage. The areas that we'd like to see further clarification or discussion include questions regarding the high-school credit for sporting education classes and youth who take the classes prior to high-school and possible inclusion of the fishing license in the reduced fee for those who haven't been issued a license in the last 10 years.

The Conservation Congress is grateful to have the opportunity to collaborate with the legislators on this issue and we look forward to continuing our work in the area recruitment and retention of hunters, trappers, and anglers to keep the strong conservation ethic alive in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Rob Bohmann, WCC Chair

As established by Wisconsin State Statutes, the Wisconsin Conservation Congress is officially recognized as the only natural resources advisory body in the state where citizens elect delegates to represent their interests on natural resources issues on a local and statewide level to the Natural Resources Board and the Department of Natural Resources. Their mission is to represent the citizens of Wisconsin by working with the Natural Resources Board and the Department of Natural Resources to effectively manage Wisconsin's greatest asset, our abundant natural resources, for present and future generations to enjoy.