

March 22, 2023

Oregon House Committee on Judiciary

RE: Youth hunting concerns & HB 2006

To the Honorable Members of the Oregon House Committee on Judiciary,

The conservation organizations signed below would like to share our significant concerns with House Bill 2006 – legislation that would limit the ability of youth to possess firearms for hunting.

The new language in HB 2006 would remove an exemption for hunting (page 2, line 3) and prevent families from creating memories like the picture below. In it, 10-year-old Sabrina Little is on her first duck hunt with her dad at a local National Wildlife Refuge. She is using a 3-shot semi-automatic shotgun, which is the most common type of legal hunting shotgun used for waterfowling. In order to obtain her first hunting license, Sabrina had to take an intensive gun safety training course offered by the state wildlife agency (which coincidentally, is not recognized under Measure 114's gun safety requirements).



Family traditions threatened by HB 2006

Our organizations believe deeply in gun safety and represent the interests of tens of thousands of youth and families that enjoy the safe and legal traditions of hunting with firearms in Oregon. Sportsmen and women have long been the primary funders of state level conservation for more than 85 years. Through the American System of Conservation Funding, hunting license fees go directly back into conservation by the State to protect lands, waters, and habitats important to Oregon's wildlife. Also, the Pittman-Robertson Act of 1937 dedicated an excise tax on firearms and ammunition that contributes millions of dollars each year directly into state conservation efforts. Oregon hunters are proud to contribute to conservation funding when purchasing our firearms and licenses.

This bill combined with duplicative training requirements (referenced above) and increased costs proposed by Measure 114 create additional barriers to entry for youth and families hunting in Oregon. This will result in fewer new hunters enjoying this outdoor family activity and will diminish the positive impacts that hunting has on Oregon's natural habitats and the fish and wildlife they support.

We share the interests of promoting safe firearm ownership and we hope you will work closely with our community to find positive opportunities to do so without diminishing the recruitment and retention of hunters and recreational shooters in Oregon that are vital for the future of conservation funding in our state. As you move forward on firearms-related bills, please feel free to contact us through Matt Little at Ducks Unlimited, mlittle@ducks.org or Keely Hopkins with Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, khopkins@congressionalsportsmen.org.

Sincerely,

Keely Hopkins
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation

Cyrus Baird
Delta Waterfowl

Matt Little
Ducks Unlimited

Jason Wisniewski
Fur Takers of America

George Pitts
Oregon Association of Ranges

Wayne Endicott
Oregon Bowhunters

Amy Patrick
Oregon Hunters Association

Kerry Spurgin
Oregon State Shooting Association

Stan Steele
Oregon Trappers Association

Chris Tymeson
Safari Club International

Michael O'Casey
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership