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April 9, 2013

Testimony in Support of HJR 16

Chair Witt & Members of the Committee,

Though hunting, fishing and trapping have long been an American heritage since before the first Europeans arrived in North America, only recently has the “right” to hunt, fish and trap come into question. Anti-hunting organizations would lead the public to believe that hunting, fishing and trapping are only a privilege subject to social pressures and prevailing public sentiments and not an inherent right.

In order to establish in perpetuity what has been assumed for centuries, numerous states have sought amendments to their state constitutions that gives their citizens a right to hunt, fish and trap and to continue a consumptive, yet responsible, use of natural resources.

HJR 16 does the following things:

- Recognizes the right of individuals to hunt, fish, trap and harvest game.
- Preserves the state’s power to regulate these activities for scientific – not political or emotional – reasons.
- Recognizes hunting, fishing and trapping as a preferred means of managing wildlife in order to protect against dangerous contraception schemes and unwarranted use of government “sharpshooters.”
- Preserves the rights of private property owners and ensures their rights are not affected or diminished in any way.

History

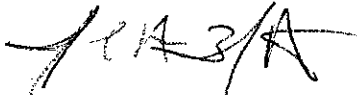
Vermont was the first state to adopt a constitutional provision protecting the rights of its citizens to hunt, trap and fish. The right has been protected in Vermont since 1777.

Other states that have amended their constitution to protect hunting, angling and trapping include: Alabama (1996), Arkansas (2010), Georgia (2006), Idaho (2012), Kentucky (2012), Louisiana (2004), Minnesota (1998), Montana (2004), Nebraska (2012), North Dakota (2000), Oklahoma (2008), South Carolina (2010), Tennessee (2010), Virginia (2000), Wisconsin (2003), and Wyoming (2012).

Additionally, California and Rhode Island have language in their constitution protecting the right to fish, but not to hunt.

Passing HJR 16 will give Oregon voters the opportunity to protect their rights to hunt, fish and trap as well as the rights of generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J Broadfoot". The signature is stylized with a large initial "J" and a long horizontal stroke.

Jerod Broadfoot
Executive Director