

From: Amanda Rabourne [<mailto:arabourne@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Sunday, February 09, 2014 8:03 PM
To: Rep Jensen
Subject: Rabourne Laser injury letter

Dear Mr. Jensen,

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter so that others may hear my side of the story.

I started hunting when I was just ten years old and have always been involved in the wilderness and outdoors with so many of my hobbies. It has been a very important part to my family and me to use the outdoors. This has been a long standing tradition that I had until my vision was lost during my Iraq tour in 2007-2008.

After losing my vision I found that I lost all the hobbies that I enjoyed before. Trying to find a way to continue hunting, I read about other states that allowed visually impaired people to use lasers to hunt alongside other people in tree stands or hunting blinds. I tried contacting the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to get an exception to the "No laser rule." After several attempts to try and reach the correct person in charge, I finally reached a lady that told me hunting was not a sport, recreation or hobby. She stated that the only reason that the fish and game allows hunting is to put meat on the table. Since this is the fish and games goal, she told me that I could apply for a disabled hunting tag that would allow someone else to shoot the animal for me. She brought up to me that the laser subject had been addressed before by others and that it has been turned down because there is no need to change the policy when they already allow someone else to shoot the animal for you. I then contacted my NRA spokesman and he recommended I speak to Representative Jensen to help me change the law so that blind or visually impaired people might be able to enjoy hunting as a sport, recreation or hobby.

There are other regulations of fish and game that limit the handicap. I am unable to hunt during bow season because I cannot hold the bow aimed and hit a target. If crossbows were allowed I would be able to use a laser and hunt the same as any other bow hunter. There are many more areas that I believe the fish and game could change to enable handicap people to be able to hunt and fish easier. My main objective now is to be able to allow lasers so that I might be able to rifle hunt again.

People who are not visually impaired do not understand that losing your vision takes away all your freedom as it is. Simple tasks are no longer done by yourself which makes it demoralizing as it is just to live. I see no reason that fish and game could not try and accommodate visually impaired and handicap people so that they might be able to live a longer more enjoyable life. This change is liable to only affect a very few amount of hunters and will not increase their chance of success but give them the freedom to succeed at something that they enjoy.

Please take in to consideration what you are able to enjoy everyday with your eyesight and how limited visually impaired people are in their daily living let alone hobbies that they once enjoyed.

I hope that in the future handicap people will not have to go through this lengthy process to be able to do what others have the opportunity to do everyday.

Thank you again for you time,

James Rabourne