

Public Hearing  
SB 5511  
Department of Fish and Wildlife  
PUBLIC TESTIMONY

4-2-15

Honorable Legislative Leaders,

I am writing today with a great sense of urgency, concerning the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's proposed fee increases for the purchase of a fishing license in Oregon.

I am a Territory Manager for Big Rock Sports, the largest distributor of fishing, camping, shooting sports and marine goods in North America. I currently service 64 independent, mostly "mom and pop" Sporting Goods retailers through out our great state, traveling from Florence to Brookings on our coast, Eugene to Medford on I-5 and Redmond to Klamath Falls in Central Oregon, with several mountain resorts in between.

These retailers, their families and mine, their employees, ranging from single proprietor to 100 plus, rely on the Sportfishing Industry for a significant, if not complete, portion of their income and livelihoods. They are our neighbors and are an integral part of the the economic foundation of many of our communities.

Please bear in mind that a robust Sportfishing industry also drives a significant amount of related business in our rural communities. From the many boat manufacturers to the motels, restaurants, gas stations and convenience stores in our region, sportfishing means business.

We all know that rural Oregon is not recovering economically as our metro neighbors are. Sportfishing related jobs are a large part of what is helping our rural communities survive. And, there is opportunity to grow this sector of our economy. But dramatically raising the cost to participate, is not the way to grow our businesses.

According to ODFW, the size of their proposed fee increase is projected to reduce over

10,000 participants from the sport of fishing. The proposed fee increase will require many prospective angler's to pay **55-65% more** over a short time! This will have a very significant negative impact on our rural economies, at a time when they continue to struggle.

Our local economies, my family and my customers' families all need a healthy Department of Fish and Wildlife and a strong partnership with the Sportfishing industry. However, the proposed numbers take us in the wrong direction, especially when there is no plan regarding retention, let alone growing, the number of individuals who are paying for the conservation mission of ODFW. As a longtime successful businessman, I can tell you that with no plan for growth, there will indeed be no growth.

Please stand up for rural Oregon families and do not support a license fee increase until the ODFW lays out a plan to prevent a future decline in license sales, and in fact grow the number the of participants to support their budget.

Respectfully,

Dave Strahan

Territory Sales Manager - Big Rock Sports

1711 E. Jones Creek Rd.

Grants Pass, Oregon 97526

[541-226-6133](tel:541-226-6133) Cell

[541-476-0533](tel:541-476-0533) Home ofc./Fax