

PA10-099

SB207

|             |  |    |
|-------------|--|----|
| Environment | 846-849, 948-953, 996, 998,<br>1071-1080, 1103-1105, 1346-<br>1366, 1391, 1744 | 48 |
| House       | 4386-4403  | 18 |
| Senate      | 1953-1978, 1988-1992   | 31 |
|             |  | 97 |

**S - 604**

**CONNECTICUT  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS  
2010**

**VOL. 53  
PART 7  
1920 - 2252**

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who may just need a little extra dollars to find a particular cure or remedy in some of the marked diseases. And with the increase in diabetes and the Alzheimer's sometimes not getting their fair share, this helps a little bit.

And I just want to express my deep appreciation to Senator Harp and others for their support.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator.

Will you comment further? Are there any further comments?

Senator Harp.

SENATOR HARP:

Thank you, Madam President. If there's no objection I move this to the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

If there is no objection it shall be moved to the consent calendar.

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Calendar page 29, Calendar number 176, file number 244 and 616, substitute for Senate Bill 207, AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE HUNTING OF DEER BY PISTOL OR

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REVOLVER, favorable report of the Committee on  
Environment, Finance, Revenue and Bonding.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I  
move acceptance of the joint committee's favorable  
report and passage of this bill.

THE CHAIR:

Will you comment further?

SENATOR MEYER:

Yes. Connecticut is one of only three states in  
the United States which does not permit the shooting  
of deer by pistol or revolver. And we have fashioned  
a bill at the request of the sportsmen and those  
sportsmen include our own colleague from the House,  
Craig Miner, which will permit the shooting of deer in  
this manner.

The bill is carefully crafted. It can only be  
done on private property. It can only be done on  
private property of more than ten acres. And the  
caliber of the bullet has got be large. So there is  
an amendment and I would ask respectfully the Clerk to  
call LCO 4404.

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THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

LCO 4404 to be designated Senate Amendment

Schedule A offered by Senator Meyer of the 12

District, et al.

SENATOR MEYER:

I move the amendment, Madam President, and ask permission to explain.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR MEYER:

Right now the bill before us permits the shooting of deer under the restricted conditions I talked about by pistol or revolver. People who are far more expert in pistols and revolvers tell me that a revolver is a more reliable handgun in this instance and therefore all this amendment does is strikes the words pistol or and permits the shooting by a revolver only. So that's the amendment and I move it.

THE CHAIR:

Is there any discussion on the amendment?

Senator Frantz.

SENATOR FRANTZ:

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Thank you, Madam President. A question through you to Senator Meyer.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR FRANTZ:

Thank you. Senator Meyer, you mentioned when you were speaking about the bill that the caliber has to be large. Is there a distinction in the definition of pistol versus revolver with respect to caliber?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Not an area of my expertise but I don't believe so from what I've been told. The difference between a pistol and a revolver is that a revolver will be able to have six cartridges in it and you can go boom, boom, boom. Whereas a pistol can have just one cartridge that has to be reloaded. And I think the thought of the sportsmen is that it is more humane to use a revolver in those conditions when you're shooting a deer.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Frantz.

SENATOR FRANTZ:

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Okay. Thank you. In trying to inch closer to the answer, I think when the word revolver is used we have visions of the Colt Peacemaker made right down the road here at Colt Manufacturing that was used by John Wayne in some of those wonderful famous movies that we all saw with the six shot cylindrical device and you had, it's a single action. You have to pull back the hammer every time. So you have six shots.

But I'm just wondering, through you, Madam President, if a pistol isn't one that may be able to employ a magazine with as many as nine or possibly 15 cartridges in a magazine which slides out through the handle.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President. Beyond my pay grade, Senator. Sorry. I don't know the answer to that question.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Frantz.

SENATOR FRANTZ:

Thank you.

SENATOR MEYER:

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There may be people in the circle who do.

SENATOR FRANTZ:

Thank you. Okay. Just so, one final question to establish some legislative intent here. It's not so much the caliber that we're looking at through this amendment. It's the number of shots available to the person using that particular fire arm.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President. That's exactly right. It's the number of shots that appear to sportsmen to be more humane.

SENATOR FRANTZ:

Thank you. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark further?

Senator Daily.

SENATOR DAILY:

Thank you, Madam President. This was something that was looked at in some other bill and then as you I think mentioned moved to this bill so it wouldn't cause any difficulty in our appropriations process.

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So I think the sportsmen are very grateful to you for bringing it out right now. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. We are voting on the amendment. Is that right?

SENATOR MEYER:

Thank you, Senator Daily, for that comment.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Roraback.

SENATOR RORABACK:

Thank you, Madam President. I rise to speak in favor of the amendment. I know that this is something that the community of sportsmen in my corner of the State who contribute mightily to the wellbeing of our outdoors, who volunteer a lot of time maintaining State owned land. It's something that they've wanted for a long time and something as Senator Meyer indicated, doesn't make Connecticut an anomaly.

We were an anomaly by not permitting this activity. Passage of this bill would put us in line with I think 48 other states in the nation that enable sportsmen to pursue what makes them happy responsibly. And, you know, life hasn't been a bowl of cherries for that community of people lately. We've left them

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wondering oftentimes and I hope that with passage of this bill we'll tip our hat in their direction. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

We are still on the amendment. Are there further discussion on the amendment? If not, I'll try your minds. All those in favor say aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR: .

All those opposed?

The ayes have it. The amendment passes. The amendment passes. And now we are back to the bill as amended.

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Thank you. And Madam President, for a further amendment I would like to yield to Senator Daily if I might.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Daily, will you accept the yield?

SENATOR DAILY:

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Thank you, Madam President. I would. I will. I do. I would like to ask the Clerk to call LCO number 4297.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

LCO 4297 which will be designated Senate Amendment Schedule B as offered by Senator Daily of the 33<sup>rd</sup> District, et al.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Daily.

SENATOR DAILY:

I move the amendment and seek leave to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR DAILY:

This will give a credit to those outdoorsmen and citizens who paid the first increase that we had in our budget. And the way they will achieve this credit, they will, when they get their license or their permit next year bring this year's higher priced permit and get a credit equal to the amount of the reduction that we have voted on.

THE CHAIR:

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Would you comment on the amendment?

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, Madam President. It is lovely to see you there. I rise in support of the amendment. I thank Senator Daily for bringing it out and making the suggestion as this would be a way to help those folks next year when it comes time to purchasing that license.

I know that many people have called my Office or emailed and feel somewhat aggrieved by the whole thing. Here we're trying to help people but on the other hand they were doing what they needed to do in the timely fashion and purchased their appropriate licenses and we thank them for helping to fill our coffers a little bit so that next year we can in turn give them a credit through this amendment.

So, I wholeheartedly support it and ask the members of the circle to do the same. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Will you comment further on the amendment?

Senator Frantz.

SENATOR FRANTZ:

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Thank you, Madam President. I'm overjoyed today to see this before the circle for hopefully a quick passage. And the reason for that is that there are so many hunters and fishermen who've already bought their licenses and will certainly appreciate getting a credit on an overpay, what would become an overpayment if this bill is passed into law.

And I think I mentioned last time I was the first one to buy a saltwater fishermen's license last year. I still haven't gone fishing since then for some reason. And I paid way too much for it. It was before it was even signed into law by the Governor. But I do have a question for Senator Daily, through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Daily, are you prepared?

SENATOR DAILY:

I would hope so.

SENATOR FRANTZ:

Senator Daily, is it fair to say that the credit delivery process will be an easy one. In other words, if you paid \$50 for whatever license it was last year, all you need to do is just present that or send it into the DEP and they will automatically grant you

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that credit on the purchase of the next year's  
license.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Daily.

SENATOR DAILY:

Thank you very much, Madam Chair, Madam  
President. You don't need to send anything anywhere.  
When you go to get your license next year you bring  
this year's license for which you've paid too much and  
on your new license you'll be given a credit equal to  
that overcharge.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Frantz.

SENATOR FRANTZ:

And through you, Madam President, so no hassles,  
no paperwork, instantaneous credit right there on the  
spot.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Daily.

SENATOR DAILY:

Thank you, Madam President. Absolutely. I've  
been so concerned about your license and I didn't want  
it to be a problem for you.

THE CHAIR:

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You see what a thoughtful group that we are.

SENATOR FRANTZ:

Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed. Please proceed.

SENATOR FRANTZ: . . :

Through you, for the record I would like to express my formal appreciation for that concern and also my appreciation for a well written bill here and specifically as it relates to licenses. Thank you, Senator. And thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Is there further discussion?

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President. I just wanted to commend Senator Daily for bringing this amendment forward because it certainly is a matter of equity that people who actually and conscientiously went out early and applied for their permits and paid the elevated fee before it was reduced again should not suffer for their conscientiousness and this will give them a refund or a credit next year.

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And I, it is I think reasonable because these are people acting in good faith who are trying to comply with the law. And when the law swings sometimes like a pendulum they should not be caught between the swinging pieces.

So again, I think this is an important matter of equity because even in urban districts like mine, Madam President, there are a substantial number of sportsmen, people who seek out fishing licenses in particular and this is something that is very welcome in that community. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you comment further?

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much, Madam President. I also rise in strong support of the amendment and would like to commend Senator Daily. I think is something where we all are in unanimous support. I was one of the many individuals that championed reducing those hunting and fishing fees.

They didn't go down as far as I had wanted but nonetheless they did go down and we listened to the constituents that we serve and we responded. And I

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think that was a good move. But after we made that initial change I heard from an awful lot of my constituents that again were trying to comply with the law and they felt caught. They were trying to do the right thing and they said we really wish we could get a credit. And here we are about passing this amendment and doing exactly that.

You know, hunters and sportsmen and fisher folks and everybody else involved in the great outdoors, they're caretakers of our environment as well. They really are stewards. And these are things that get passed down from generation to generation. And it doesn't take too much time to go off the beaten path in Connecticut and find some beautiful resources that we have.

I know up in Enfield we have a certain section of the Connecticut River that is known throughout the United States for the fishing that it offers. And we have so many of those other resources in our State as well.

And so these are good, honest, law-abiding folks. They want to do the right thing. They want to teach their sons and daughters the things that they like to pursue whether it's hunting, fishing or just going out

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in the woods and admiring all the great things that we have out there. And so, I'm happy.

I am very, very happy this afternoon that we're treating them right. They sort of got kicked around a little bit in the fall when that budget came down the road and we're remedied that. And I'm hoping that we can continue along this path working together, Republicans and Democrats alike to do what's right for the good people of the State of Connecticut. So, thank you very much for this amendment. I strongly support it.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator LeBeau.

SENATOR LeBEAU:

Thank you, Madam President. And like everyone else has said, it's great to see you up there.

And I don't want to prolong this but I do want to thank Senator Daily for doing this. Sometimes government doesn't work. In this case, Senator Daily, you made it work. As everyone's said, this is equitable. It's the right thing to do. We've stepped back on the fees and for those folks who paid the full amount this is the right thing to do for them. And

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I'm hoping that the House will, after we pass this along, that the House will pass this and show that sometimes we can work in a bipartisan way to get some good things done.

Thank you very much, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further?

Senator McLachlan.

SENATOR McLACHLAN:

Thank you, Madam President. I rise in support of the amendment. I want to thank Senator Daily for her leadership in the sportsmen caucus and your work on behalf of Connecticut sportsmen. But also this is an equitable amendment. It makes sense and thank you for bringing it forward.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further? Will you?

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, Madam President. I too rise in support of this amendment. There's a bit of good news here. We in our Republican Caucus had filed this amendment on about 30 bills earlier in the session. So now we can withdraw all those amendments as well.

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And I think this is, this is further evidence that sometimes mistakes can be made and people are willing to stand up and make them.

Increasing these fees as was done as part of the budget was a mistake. Decreasing them was the right thing to do. The mistakes that were made with the credit and is the final correction of a wrong that should not have happened in the first place.

So I'm glad that we stand here. A year ago we were divided in a partisan way in that budget but today we're here in a bipartisan way undoing a wrong of that budget. And I stand in support of this amendment. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further?

Senator McDonald.

SENATOR McDONALD:

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I rise in support of the amendment as well and thank Senator Daily for attending to an issue that I think all of us believe in. I only regret that it was attached to this underlying bill which causes me concern.

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But I do believe that the folks who have paid this fee previously should be afforded that credit. So I'm happy to support the amendment. And Madam President, I ask when the vote be taken it be taken by roll call.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator.

Will you remark further? We're remarking on the amendment.

Mr. Clerk, will you call for a roll call vote on the, on is this amendment B?

THE CLERK:

Yes.

THE CHAIR:

Sorry. Amendment C?

THE CLERK:

B.

THE CHAIR:

I thought it was B. We'll go back to amendment B.

Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate. Will all Senators please return to the

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chamber. Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate. Will all Senators please return to the chamber.

THE CHAIR:

The machine is open. You may cast your vote.

If everyone has voted the machine will be closed and the Clerk will call the, take the tally.

THE CLERK:

The motion is on adoption of Senate Amendment Schedule B.

|                             |    |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Total number Voting         | 34 |
| Those voting Yea            | 34 |
| Those voting Nay            | 0  |
| Those absent and not voting | 2  |

THE CHAIR:

The amendment passes.

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Madam President, I believe there should be a roll call vote on this. I don't think it will go by consent. And I have no further remarks to make concerning the underlying bill.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

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SENATOR MEYER:

As amended.

THE CHAIR:

If you have no remarks there will be a roll call.

Senator Witkos, I apologize.

SENATOR WITKOS:

Thank you, Madam President. If I may, just a few questions to the proponent of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed.

SENATOR WITKOS:

Thank you, Madam President. In section 39 of the or line 39 of the bill it speaks that no person shall authorize, carry, or possess a pistol or revolver except as provided in section 1 of this particular act.

And I have a concern and if you could just speak to, does this allow, with this language allow someone to carry who does not hold a pistol permit in the State of Connecticut, the ability to transport a firearm in a vehicle to hunt on private land? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

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SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President, the existing law, Senator Witkos, as I understand it is that a firearms hunting or a combination firearms hunting and fishing license does not authorize the carrying of a pistol or revolver. The bill before us modifies that by making an exception in being able to carry a revolver in the shooting of deer under the restrictive conditions set up under the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS:

Thank you, Madam President. And through you to Senator Meyer is there anything in the bill that would be affirmative defense to someone that is stopped walking through the woods that has a pistol or revolver on their person similar to legislation that we passed last year for somebody riding an ATV on private property. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Through you, Madam President, Senator Witkos, you're an excellent law enforcement officer and you

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probably know the answer to that question better than me.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS:

Thank you, Madam President. I thank the gentleman for his answer. Ladies and gentlemen of the circle, I will be voting no on this bill. I ask for your rejection as well. In my read of the bill the last section of the language that we're about to vote on says that the carrying of a pistol or a revolver except as provided in this section one. And in section one states that you can carry it in order to hunt on private property.

There's nothing in the language that says you have to show a note that you're actually hunting, you have that person's permission. There's nothing in the language that gives you the right to carry a firearm from your home to this private property. Who is to say or where you're going to get to that private property.

If I was to stop somebody on the side of the road and they had a pistol in their vehicle and I asked do you have a pistol permit and they said no, I'm going

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hunting. According to this bill if it's passed, then they're allowed to do that. And I urge you that's very dangerous. Because there's nothing that causes a prevention or evidence to show that they're actually going hunting.

Yeah, somebody might throw in some camouflage gear or some binoculars and say well, I have a tree stand so I'm allowed to do that. Also, I don't believe there's any checks and balances in here if somebody does not have the right to carry a firearm under the federal disqualifications. With somebody that's been involved in a domestic violence that has had their rights to carry a firearm taken away.

None of those protections are contained within this bill. So I urge the Chamber's rejection. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further?

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

In brief rebuttal, Madam Speaker to Senator Witkos, it's clear that the current law, current law says in lines 36 to 38 that a firearms hunting or a

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combination firearms hunting and fishing license does not authorize the possession of a revolver.

What this bill simply does, as requested by Representative Craig Miner and the sportsmen, is it says that if you're hunting deer on private property of more than ten acres you can carry a revolver. That's what this bill does. And with respect to Senator Witkos's statement about driving in your car, I think most of our laws have a rule of reason.

And I respect his views as a law enforcement officer but he seems to be setting up a hypothetical situation that is not in my experience a real one. So I do urge support for this bill. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further? Will you remark further?

Mr. Clerk, will you call for an immediate vote on the bill.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been order in the Senate.

Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.

Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

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Senator Gaffey.

Have all the votes been counted? I still Senator  
Stillman. Senator Stillman.

If all the Senators have voted.

Okay. She's coming.

If everyone has cast his or her vote the voting  
machine will be closed.

THE CLERK:

The motion is on passing Senate Bill 207 as amended.

|                             |    |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Total number Voting         | 34 |
| Those voting Yea            | 24 |
| Those voting Nay            | 10 |
| Those absent and not voting | 2  |

THE CHAIR:

The bill passes.

Mr. Clerk:

THE CLERK:

Calendar page 31, Calendar number 207, file  
number 303, substitute for Senate Bill 383, AN ACT  
CONCERNING A STATEWIDE WATER USE PLAN, favorable  
report of the Committees on Environment and Public  
Health.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

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THE CHAIR:

Senator Looney.

We will stand at ease. The Senate will stand at ease briefly.

(At ease.)

THE CHAIR:

The Senate will return to order.

Senator Gaffey.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Stand at ease for a moment, Madam President.

(At ease.)

THE CHAIR:

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you. Thank you, Madam President. I apologize for the delay. Madam President, would move for reconsideration of calendar page 29, Calendar 126, Senate Bill 207. I was on the prevailing side in that vote and would move for reconsideration.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, it is ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Yes. Thank you, Madam President.

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THE CHAIR:

The Senate will stand at ease again.

(At ease.)

THE CHAIR:

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Yes. Madam President, thank you again. Would  
move for reconsideration of calendar page 29, Calendar  
176, Senate Bill 207.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Recalling calendar page 29, Calendar 176, files  
number 244 and 616, substitute for Senate Bill 207, AN  
ACT AUTHORIZING THE HUNTING OF DEER BY PISTOL OR  
REVOLVER, favorable report Committees on Environment,  
Finance, Revenue and Bonding. When the bill was last  
before us it was amended by Senate Amendment Schedules  
A and B.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER:

Thank you, Madam President. Colleagues, you'll  
recall this was the bill that permits the shooting of

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deer by revolver under restricted conditions. And it has two amendments on it. One of our colleagues has indicated that after further looking at the law she would like to change her vote. And Senator Witkos has also spoken to me as the sponsor of this bill and I yield to Senator Witkos.

THE CHAIR:

Do you accept the yield, Senator?

SENATOR WITKOS:

Thank you, Madam President. Yes, I do accept the yield. I'd like to apologize to my colleagues in the circle. In my rush to read the bill I was concerned that there was not a provision that which would have required somebody to be in possession of a pistol permit.

And all those actions that I had cited in my testimony would have occurred. However, upon rereading the bill it does say that you must have a pistol permit in order to hunt on private property. So all those concerns that I had have been mitted out and I wholeheartedly support the bill. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

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Will you comment further?

Senator Prague.

SENATOR PRAGUE:

Thank you, Madam President. It's very nice to see you up there. I too thought that there was no permit for the pistol required. In reading the bill more closely and discussing this with Senator Witkos it was obvious that there is a pistol permit required. And consequently I want to change my vote from no to yea.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator.

Will anyone remark further? Are there any further remarks?

Then the Clerk will, we will open, the Clerk will call for an immediate vote and we will open the voting machine.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber. Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate. Will all Senators please return to the chamber.

THE CHAIR:

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Senator LeBeau. I'm doing it for him. Here he comes.

He's gone.

If everyone has voted. Oh, Senator Daily. Sorry. If everyone has voted the machine will be closed and the Clerk will take a tally.

THE CLERK:

The motion is on passage of Senate Bill 207 as amended.

|                             |    |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Total number Voting         | 34 |
| Those voting Yea            | 25 |
| Those voting Nay            | 9  |
| Those absent and not voting | 2  |

THE CHAIR:

The bill passes.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, for purposes of a couple of additional markings. Again, the next bill to call would be as indicated before calendar page 40, Calendar 417, House Bill 5282. And then after that, Madam President, the next two items would be calendar page 4 under favorable reports, Calendar 143, Senate

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**CONNECTICUT  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS  
2010**

**VOL.53  
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4246 – 4582**

rgd/mb/gbr  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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May 4, 2010

roll call. Members to the chamber, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? Well the members please check the board to determine if your vote has been properly cast.

If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

Will the Clerk please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

Senate Bill 281 in concurrence with the Senate.

Total number voting 150

Necessary for adoption 76

Those voting Yea 150

Those voting Nay 0

Those absent and not voting 1

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

The bill passes.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar Number 453.

THE CLERK:

On page 21, Calendar 453, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 207, AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE HUNTING OF DEER BY PISTOL OR REVOLVER, favorable report of the Committee on Finance, Revenue and Bonding.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

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The chairman of the Environment Committee,  
Representative Roy.

REP. ROY (119th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I move acceptance of the joint  
committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

The question is acceptance of the joint  
committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

Will you remark?

REP. ROY (119th):

Yes, sir.

This bill requires the Department of  
Environmental Protection to issue permits allowing  
handgun hunting of deer on private land of at least  
ten acres during the normal deer season, November 1st  
to December 31st. The hunting is pursuant to the  
private land deer permit bag limit established by the  
commissioner. The hunters must use a cartridge of at  
least .357 calibers. I move passage.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark? Will you remark further?

Representative Miner.

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REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Clerk is in possession of an amendment, LCO 4404. If he call it and I be allowed to summarize, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Will the Clerk please call LCO Number 4404, which will be designated House Amendment Schedule A? -- my mistake -- will the Clerk please call LCO Number 4404, which will be designated Senate Amendment Schedule "A."

THE CLERK:

LCO number 4404, Senate "A," offered by Senator Meyer, Representative Miner, et al.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

The Representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize the amendment.

Is there objection to summarization? Is there objection?

Hearing none, Representative Miner, you may proceed.

REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The purpose of the amendment is to further

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restrict the handgun being allowed for use in this manner and I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

The question before the Chamber is adoption of Senate Amendment Schedule "A."

Will you remark further on the amendment?

REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, after a number of conversations both with members of the sporting community and members here within the chamber, I ask that the amendment be drafted, which was to remove the word pistol or pistols or in three cases, within the bill restricting the use of the handgun to a mechanical cylindered handgun or revolver only. As the good chairman of the Environment Committee stated upon bringing the bill out, the bill with this amendment would only allow the use of this handgun weapon on private land ten acres or more.

There are 47 states in the country that allow this type of hunting. The state of Connecticut already allows the use of a handgun on both private and public land for hunting purposes. There are about 50,000 hunting licenses issued every year in the state

of Connecticut and about 200,000 permits to carry here in the state of Connecticut. So there's a fairly large community of people with the experience and an interest. I think at the time we did the fees bill before, there was an estimate of about 4,000 people that we thought might avail themselves of this.

There's no expansion of the season. There is some additional revenue and I ask for support.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Adoption. Move adoption.

REP. MINER (66th):

And I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark further? Will you remark further on the amendment?

Representative Roy.

REP. ROY (119th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I view this as a friendly amendment. I ask my colleagues on this side of the aisle to support it also. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Thank you, sir.

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Will you remark further on the amendment? Will you remark further on the amendment before us?

If not, let me try your minds. All those in favor, please signify by saying, aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

All those opposed, nay.

The ayes have it. The amendment is adopted.

Will you remark further on the bill as amended?

Will you remark further on the bill as amended?

Representative Hornish.

REP. HORNISH (62nd):

Thank you --

REP. ROY (119th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have an amendment. The clerk has an amendment, excuse me.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative Roy, please proceed.

REP. ROY (119th):

The Clerk has an amendment, LCO Number 4297. I ask that it be called and I be allowed to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Will the Clerk please call LCO Number 4297, which

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will be designated Senate Amendment Schedule "B."

THE CLERK:

LCO number 4297, Senate "B," offered by Senators  
Daily, Stillman, Prague and Handley.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative seeks leave of the Chamber to  
summarize the amendment.

Is there objection to summarization? Is there  
objection?

Hearing none, Representative Roy, you may  
proceed, please.

REP. ROY (119th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we had raised or the Governor had  
raised -- I'll put it that way -- a number of fees and  
licenses and permits with regard to hunting and  
fishing. And what this amendment does, it gives  
people the credit for those license, any overpayment  
of the bill that we subsequently passed, which cut the  
fees for those very same licenses and permits.

This is going to save many of our constituents  
good money in the next year and I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

The question before the Chamber is adoption of

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Senate Amendment Schedule "B."

Will you remark on the amendment?

Representative Cafero.

REP. CAFERO (142nd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I stand in strong support of the amendment that's before us with one minor clarification.

The Governor might have proposed but the Legislature delivered. We would not be in a position to do this bill had this Legislature not voted increase in those fees. So we've taken care of that subsequently with the deficit mitigation. We're completing the job with this amendment.

So I stand in strong support. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Thank you.

Will you remark further on the amendment? Will you remark further?

Representative Hovey.

REP. HOVEY (112th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as a Representative of a community that has several fish and game clubs, I received a lot

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of inquiry from my constituents about the change in fees. There are many individuals that are depending now on fishing and their own on hunting in order to take care of their families and so I support this amendment a hundred percent. Thank you, sir.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Thank you, madam.

Will you remark further on the amendment?

Representative Bye.

REP. BYE (19th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

A question for the proponent of the amendment, through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Please proceed, madam.

REP. BYE (19th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, to Representative Roy, there's a fiscal note on this bill. Is that correct?

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative Roy.

REP. ROY (119th):

Yes, ma'am.

I'll check again. There will be a revenue loss of 1.5 million -- 1.15 million.

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DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative Bye.

REP. BYE (19th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, how will that \$1.5 million be made up in the budget? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative Roy.

REP. ROY (119th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, in the coming year, that will be part of the budget. It will be made up at that point.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative Bye.

REP. BYE (19th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, is that part of the current budget mitigation plan.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative Roy.

REP. ROY (119th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Not to my knowledge.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative Bye.

REP. BYE (19th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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I have concerns about the expense given the current budget, but I appreciate the gentleman's answers. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Thank you, madam.

Will you remark further on the amendment to?  
Will you remark further?

If not, let me try your minds. All those in favor, please signify by saying, aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

All those opposed, nay.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Nay.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

The ayes have it. And the amendment is adopted.

Will you remark further on the bill as amended?

Representative Hurlburt.

REP. HURLBURT (53rd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the bill before us and I just want to take a moment to thank Representative Miner and Representative Roy,

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Representative Lewis and many others that -- for their due diligence to correct the inequities of the deficit mitigation plan that we put forward. We have a fairness for all the people who decided to purchase their licenses and ask my colleagues to join me in strong support.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark further on the bill as amended?

Representative Hornish.

REP. HORNISH (62nd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

A few questions to the proponent of the bill, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Please proceed.

REP. HORNISH (62nd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, my understanding with handguns is there not well suited for long-range shooting. And therefore, might have less ability to hit targeted animals, the targeted animals. So my first question is why, with other weapons available for hunters to use, why handgun? Through you.

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DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative Roy.

REP. ROY (119th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

If I may, I would to yield the floor to Representative Miner, who is much more knowledgeable in this area.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative Roy, you can't yield the floor because you don't have the floor because you don't have -- Representative Hornish, would you please redirect your question if you don't mind, to Representative Miner.

REP. HORNISH (62nd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, may I redirect the question to Representative Miner.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative Miner, please proceed if you did get the question.

REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I think I heard the question, as I understand it, there some question about the accuracy of the gun being used. And my understanding is that there's a

lot more to this that involves human error than gun error, whether it's with a bow and arrow, a shotgun, a rifle, we allow a state of Connecticut all sorts of implements for hunting.

The people that have approached me about this issue practice weekly. There's nobody that's going to get involved in this sport that isn't fairly confident of their target and absolutely confident about what they're doing. They practice at 25, 50 and 75 feet. I think these weapons are extremely accurate in that range and if there are any other questions, I'd be glad to answer them....

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative Hornish.

REP. HORNISH (62nd):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that answer, Representative. Would you -- are there any studies that show that hunting with pistol is at least as efficient as hunting with a rifle or a bow? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative Miner.

REP. MINER (66th):

I think the conversations you and I have had

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previously, there are no statistics that show they are any less accurate than a rifle or a bow. And, again, I would go back to the individuals that are involved. These are not inexpensive guns. Most of them belong to clubs. Most of them practice continuously and I have every faith that their pursuit of the game and the purpose are both good. Though you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative Hornish.

REP. HORNISH (62nd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, just two more questions. With the bag limits be increased? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative Miner.

REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I do think the gentlelady for question. When we talked about this bill in committee, there was a concern about expanding the bag limits and expanding the season and, as a committee, we agreed that we would embed the use of this gun with a shotgun or rifle season, which I believe in the bill is somewhere from November 1 to December 31st. And frankly, I think the DEP has the

right under regulatory authority to shorten that if they wish to. So there's no addition to animal harvest in terms of any additional tags. There is a \$5 fee and no additional season. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Representative Hornish.

REP. HORNISH (62nd):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I thank the Representative for his answers to my questions.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Thank you, madam.

Will you remark further on the bill as amended?  
Will you remark further?

Representative Tercyak.

REP. TERCYAK (26th):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I was born in Maine and pretty much everybody in my family up there did then and still now hunts. One of tales I heard growing up was about the time my uncles were out deer hunting and after taking a shot and missing with a normal rifle or whatever it is that you shoot a deer and miss with, my other uncles were horrified to see my Uncle Donald pull out a pistol and go charging through the brush. They thought it was

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the stupidest thing they ever saw. Now, those uncles aren't around to talk to me too much about it right now, so I actually could have them be harsher than they were, but I won't.

But this still doesn't sound like a good idea to me. I love the idea of returning people's money who overpaid on their license, but we could, A, do that whenever. We attach it to something else. It could be language somewhere else, but I think that it's harder to aim a pistol than we have another danger with hunting as it is now.

I'm not opposed to hunting. You can't -- if we can make a bullet that would stop at the edge of your yard, I'd say pay you to shoot deer if you could get them to come into your yard so you can shoot them. I just don't think this is safe. So, as sad as I am about the rebates, which we can do some other way, I'm going to oppose this bill. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark further on the bill as amended?

Will you remark further on the bill as amended?

If not, will staff and guests please come to the

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well of the House. Will the members please take their seats. The machine will be opened.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll call. Members to the chamber. The House is voting by roll call. Members to the chamber.

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? Will the members please check the board to determine if your vote has been properly cast.

If all the members have voted the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take the tally.

Will the Clerk please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

Senate Bill 207 as amended by Senate Schedules "A" and "B" in concurrence with the Senate.

|                             |     |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Total number voting         | 147 |
| Necessary for adoption      | 74  |
| Those voting Yea            | 113 |
| Those voting Nay            | 34  |
| Those absent and not voting | 4   |

DEPUTY SPEAKER O'CONNOR:

The bill passes in concurrence with the Senate.

The Majority Leader, Representative --

**JOINT  
STANDING  
COMMITTEE  
HEARINGS**

**ENVIRONMENT  
PART 3  
659 – 995**

**2010**

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these offending lines, 244 through 246.

SCOTT JACOBS: Thank you.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Thank you.

REP. ROY: Comments or questions from members of the Committee? Seeing none, thank you very much.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Thank you for this opportunity. I do agree the rest of the bill is a good bill.

REP. ROY: Senator Kissel followed by Agricultural Department's Commissioner Prelli.

SENATOR KISSEL: Chairman Meyer, Chairman Roy, Ranking Member Chapin, esteemed Members of the Environment Committee, Representative Hornish, my friend and colleague -- always delighted to represent our neck of the woods -- I'm here to speak in strong support of Senate Bill 207. That's your bill that would slightly reduce the increases in the hunting and fishing license fees that went up, essentially doubled, as a result of the budget that went through last year.

There's an awful lot of sports folks up on my neck of the woods. I know traditionally they're called sportsmen, but there's a lot of women who like to go out hunting and fishing as well, and to be quite frank, we're aghast that the last year's budget -- which I voted against -- doubled the fees to them, and they thought that was an outrageous increase.

I had proposed legislation that would have brought that back to what it was prior to that increase, and that bill didn't move forward, but Senate Bill 207 at least makes a reduction in that fee increase, and I am a co-sponsor of

that legislation. It's a welcome relief.

I would suggest that it's a great start. If anybody wants to work with me to try to find funds to try to reduce it even more, I would be more than happy to work with any members of this Committee or anybody in this building to try to reduce those fees. Essentially, I believe that our hunters and fishers and folks like that, they're protectors of the environment. They are conservators.

Back once upon a time in the 1990's when the Republicans had the majority in the Senate, I was Co-chair of the General Law Committee, and I will say that folks don't mind paying fees if they feel that it's going towards the area that they're working in. In other words, an electrician doesn't mind paying an electrical fee license if they feel that that helps police, making sure that folks from out of state aren't unlawfully competing.

The hunters and folks that like to go fishing and sportspeople in our state don't mind paying those fees if they feel that it's going into an environmental purpose, but they feel that essentially to fill a hole in the General Fund, that they were tagged, and they felt that they were unfairly tagged by having it go up 100 percent last year.

I applaud the drafts of this proposal, Senate Bill 207, because while at the same time reducing those licensure fees, you have found revenues to balance that out, which is what we have to do this year. We're looking at a half a billion dollar shortfall between now and the end of June, and then in the coming year, I think it's about \$624 million, and then after that projections are three consecutive years of \$3 billion in deficit, so we are really in

a jam when it comes to finances, but these folks perform a valuable function. A lot of hunters and fishermen are elderly. This is what they do as a recreation and as a pastime. They don't mind paying their fair share, but they really don't want to feel that they're at the losing end of the budget battle here in the building, and they were, quite frankly, taken aback by what took place last year.

So, I strongly support Senate Bill 207. I applaud your efforts. It's a move in the right direction. If we can find a way to reduce it even more, I will work with you hand in glove. I serve on the Commission on Enhancing Agency Outcomes, and we are looking for ways to find millions upon millions of dollars for our budget. There's an awful lot of areas that we can prune, but I think that this revenue increase was burdensome on a whole lot of folks, and this is a good step forward in trying to reduce it and make it a little bit more fair.

And, I'm happy to answer any questions that you may have.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Senator Meyer?

SENATOR MEYER: Thank you, John, for your testimony.

We've been advised -- the Environment Committee has been advised that we're still out of line with respect to fishing licenses. We're too high, and we're non-competitive with New York and Rhode Island, and New York and Rhode Island are charging a license -- fishing licenses of about 7 and 10 dollars, and we're off in the 24-dollar category.

Do you think that would have any effect in

your district?

SENATOR KISSEL: Absolutely. There's a certain area in Enfield in particular that -- Enfield borders the Connecticut River -- that is just famous for the fishing that's available there, and actually we've worked with federal authorities because it's a little tricky. You have to cross the train tracks, and there has been a little bit of an issue with Amtrak.

There are huge amounts of areas in north central Connecticut that are famous for the fishing that's available and, quite frankly, we are way out of line with our bordering states. So, you know, Enfield borders the Connecticut River; it also borders Massachusetts. Why would you want to fish in Connecticut if you can just go a few miles up the road and fish in Massachusetts?

So, I actually think being in a border community, quite often even if you reduce the dollar amount of what you're charging, you will make that up in volume, and so I think at the end of the day if you really crunch the numbers with fiscal analysis, we may be in the same spot even if we reduce the overall dollar amount because we're going to get a lot more volume, so, Senator Meyer, I appreciate that question. You're exactly correct.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any other questions or comments from the members of the Committee? Seeing none, Senator, thank you very much.

SENATOR KISSEL: Thank you, gentlemen.

REP. ROY: Commissioner Prelli followed by Karl Wagener.

F. PHILIP PRELLI: Good morning, Senator Meyer,

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SB 274

I'm sorry. May I continue? Okay.

Here is a product and an industry that our own state Legislator said we need to get back to more entrepreneurial. Here are the products, the industry and the technology that is allowing us to succeed: The home owner, the farmer, the small businessman. If we regulate this thing any further, which it does not need to be, but if we regulate this thing any further, the small businessman, the farmer, and even the home owner, it's going to go the same way as Pratt & Whitney, United Nuclear, American Standard, Pfizer, Franklin Mushroom Farm, on and on and on. They were all taxed out of business, and all those people received tax benefits to stay in the state. What happened? Their benefits ran out; they left.

Thank you.

REP. ROY: Any questions or comments from members of the Committee? Seeing none, thank you very much.

Bob Crook followed by Jonathan Bilmes.

ROBERT T. CROOK: Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, Members of the Committee, my name is Bob Crook. I represent the Coalition of Connecticut Sportsmen testifying on S.B. 207, recent increases in hunting and fishing licenses.

This is probably the most important bill I've testified on in many, many years. It not only affects sportsmen; it affects the DEP, and it affects the state.

We oppose the bill language, the current bill language. It again raises marine fishing.

resident licenses to \$30, which impacts many of the other combination licenses. It doesn't allow flexibility in the pheasant program, and it increases previous 2009 fees by only 20 percent and reduces some commercial fees.

We support the concept of lowering fees, and we support substitute language increasing fees to 25 percent over the previous 2009 fees. This has been accepted by sportsmen and includes additional Super Sport and other new licenses.

The substitute language should have been sent to you last night by e-mail, and we'd like you to take a look at it. A hundred percent increase in all license fees affects the public differently. Business fees are a pass-through to the consumer. One-time fees, birth certificates, death, court costs, driver's licenses are legal social necessities. Sportsman fees, however, are recreational and are voluntary discretionary income purchases.

The 100 percent fees are not competitive and will balance with the surrounding regional state fees, and there's tables on my Web site if you'd like to see those, and we expect that many Connecticut sportsmen will hunt and fish in adjoining states, and this will absolutely reduce to a virtual zero non-resident licenses. The result is a loss of both resident and tourism revenue impacting small businesses' tax revenue and diminish Connecticut as a friendly state, and most important, it will reduce fish and wildlife management.

There will be a serious Connecticut retention loss and no appreciable recruitment. Junior licenses in the bill are reduced, and we

approve of that. A table on my Web site, fishing and hunting license sales '89 to 2008, demonstrates annual attrition rates under the normal ten-year cycle, and a dramatic one-half lost in the 20 years.

The 100 percent increase will cause significantly higher participation losses, promote attrition, and will impact fishing boat purchases and registration, a revenue loss in sales and gas taxes and marina sales repair. Fewer hunters and fishermen also impact aquaculture, commercial trout hatcheries, and pheasant farms located in the state. Many small business owners relating to retailing hunting, fishing, boating and related activities anticipating the impact of sales reductions, non-participation, reduced recruitment, have concluded their businesses may not survive.

Sportsmen recognize the fiscal problem the state is facing. We promoted a 25 percent increase in 2009, broke the ten-year cycle, but that was a compromise. Expecting sportsmen that will pay the 100 percent fees is optimistic, and those with modest financial means will no longer participate. Many who previously purchased a broad spectrum of licenses supporting conservation will limit licenses to only those actually needed and used.

REP. ROY: Will you wrap up there, Bob?

ROBERT T. CROOK: Yes, I will.

We know there's a second part of this bill. I'm not testifying on it. I think that's going to be done by Senator DeFronzo in Transportation. We hope that by increasing the fees in this bill by us, by 5 percent, and

the DMV fees will make this bill revenue neutral. If it doesn't, sportsmen, DEP and the state are in serious trouble.

Thank you.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Senator Meyer?

SENATOR MEYER: Bob, I just wanted to thank you on behalf of the Environment Committee for the input you've given to us, not only this afternoon but also in your meetings with us. It's very helpful and very pertinent. Thank you.

ROBERT T. CROOK: Thanks.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Representative Lambert?

REP. LAMBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hi, Mr. Crook.

Would you in your opinion feel that there's going to be an abuse of regulations as far as sportsmen going out and getting licenses? Do you think that that's a possibility, that that might increase if those fees stay the way they are?

I just have a lot of people come up to me and say they're awful steep raises, and I wouldn't want to see people be doing more illegal things because of costs. Would you just address that?

ROBERT T. CROOK: I work two shows, one in Springfield which a lot of Connecticut people come to, and one in Hartford, sportsman shows. This is a common theme. They know that the DEP is under-staffed. When you put 30, 35, people in the field on a 24-hour, 7-day basis with all the other things they have to go

through, there's virtually nobody out there.

I don't know -- I mean, I hate to say this about my sportsmen, but I think hearing the comments, whether they prove valid or not, there may be people who will -- who will not purchase licenses.

REP. LAMBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, also, I'd like to address the people that honestly cannot afford the licenses. I mean, there are people that I know in my own district that use their licenses to go out and hunt for food, and I think that would also be a negative impact, and one other question I'd like to ask is the differential between the marine fishing license and the inland and that people, even if they want to do that differently, unless they pay extra for a combination, that's another increase.

ROBERT T. CROOK: Yes. Whoever wrote this current bill jumped the fee increase for marine licenses from \$10 to \$30. Now, we fought that last year I don't know how many different times, and finally got it reduced to ten, and now we see in this bill it's gone to 30 again, which is outrageous. New York charges 10 and 15; Rhode Island charges 7 and 10. We're charging -- under this bill, we're charging 30 and 60. Nobody's going to come to Connecticut for those prices, so -- and if they do come to Connecticut, outsiders, non-residents come, I've been recommending that they stop in New York or stop in Rhode Island and buy their licenses at a cheaper, much cheaper price, and they can still fish because we have reciprocity; they can still fish Connecticut waters.

So, it behooves us to reduce these licenses

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down to a reasonable level.

REP. LAMBERT: Thank you, Mr. Crook, and thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

REP. ROY: Representative Hornish?

REP. HORNISH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Crook.

If poaching increases, would you support stiffer penalties on poaching?

ROBERT T. CROOK: Absolutely. That's something else you might put in this bill. You might raise the -- raise the penalties for conservation violations. It is not in here. It hasn't been addressed. It has been suggested by my contacts in DEP. That might be another way of making this bill revenue neutral. We have no objection.

REP. HORNISH: That's great. Thank you.

REP. ROY: Any other questions or comments? Seeing none, thanks, Bob.

ROBERT T. CROOK: Thank you.

REP. ROY: Jonathan Bilmes followed by Theresa Prangley -- it looks like Prably -- from Westport.

JONATHAN S. BILMES: Good afternoon, Representative Roy and Members of the Environment Committee. My name is Jonathan Bilmos. I'm the Executive Director of the Bristol Resource Recovery and Tunxis Recycling Operating Committees.

Now, we fully recognize that the economy is front and center during this session of the General Assembly, but it is important that we

HB 5319  
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**JOINT  
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10:30 A.M.

RONALD CUTONE: Thank you.

REP. ROY: Virginia Bertram followed by Robert Franklin.

ELANA BERTRAM: Chairman Meyer, Chairman Roy, Members of the Committee.

In the interest of time, my mother, Virginia, has agreed to compress our testimony into her allotted time so we can all go home from there. I would also direct you to the submitted testimony of Joel Serota, one of the leaders of the newly approved Woodbury Litchfield Hills (inaudible). He was not able to stay, but he's submitted written testimony as well.

SB207

My name is Elana Bertram from Newtown. I'm a lifelong animal lover, and I participate in the traditional sport of fox hunting with hounds. As a sportswoman, I understand that the welfare of our animals is very important, and it is a responsibility I take seriously.

Nothing in Raised Bill S.B. 274 serves either owners or their animals. In the wrong hands, this bill is a cudgel to attack otherwise lawful dog ownership. I speak against letting the fringe element of animal rightists influence the governance or infringe the rights of normal law-abiding citizens in their push for a needless and petless society.

This bill is aimed at kennels such as our kennel for our fox hounds. As is natural with pack animals, hounds are kept communally in the packs they hunt in to encourage bonding and teamwork. Sometimes eight or more hounds occupy the same kennel run, and they usually get along swimmingly.

I hope the Committee fully realizes the sweeping scope of this bill in the wrong hands. It will effectively criminalize our humane and lawful system of keeping dogs by imposing unreasonable, arbitrary standards on how the dogs are housed.

This bill is impractically vague. Without ever harming a dog, owners could be subject to fines for the mere potential of harm based on a subjective opinion.

I know my time is short, but I would also ask you to vote yes on hunting permit fee reductions proposed in S.B. 207.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and your vote of no on S.B. 274. I'll take any questions.

SENATOR MEYER: Okay. Ms. Bertram, I just want to be sure that you look carefully at this bill because this bill largely relates to the size of animal quarters, the space in which an animal would live, and there's a very specific exemption of kennels, and I just wanted to be sure that you looked at lines 34 to 38 and saw that specific exemption of kennels.

ELANA BERTRAM: Yes. Thirty-four and 38 reference -- and you can see in my submitted testimony -- 22-342 and 22-344 probably do not apply to fox hound kennels. We do not have typically more than two litters a year, so we're not a breeder, and we're also not a commercial facility, so that exemption doesn't apply to us as far as my reading of those other statutes.

SENATOR MEYER: Okay. And, if we amended this bill to include kennels, whether they're under those sections or otherwise, just kennels,

DALE MAY: Good afternoon, Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, and Members of the Committee.

I'm here to strongly support the concept of Senate Bill 207 which would adjust sportsmen's licenses, and I'd like to say that this is really not a sportsmen's issue in my eyes. It's a wildlife management issue. For the past century, it's really been the hunters and the fishermen that have supported our wildlife conservation efforts with licenses and fees and their excise taxes.

This model has been very successful in restoring some of our wildlife, but the model is straining. First of all, our sportsmen population is aging. There's fewer people coming in than are going out. Second, our mandates have expanded dramatically. In 2005, the DEP created the Connecticut Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy which identifies our most critical needs for wildlife. Very few of these relate to game animals. We do need additional funding sources to support wildlife conservation here in Connecticut.

One of the first things we're going to have to do in addition to identifying other sources of funding is to at least retain the ones we have, and the budget that passed in 2009 basically doubled all sportsman's fees, and that's going to have a tremendous negative impact on participation in the future, so basically this small segment of society that's shouldered the finances of supporting the wildlife that belongs to all of us has been hit with a huge fee increase. It's completely out of line with any other state.

Back in 2003, there was a 40 percent increase in sportsman fees that put us ahead of our

other states. This is going to put us in a different stratosphere.

On top of that, the last year during the session they eliminated some sportsman's programs that they developed to help wildlife, the duck stamp, for example. There was talk of taking away the money from the wildlife license plates that the sportsmen had fought for. So, I think there's a concept out there that you've basically abandoned the sportsmen, and no one is going to fill the breach to pay for wildlife programs.

So, I strongly support the concept of this bill which is to raise the fee increase to maybe 20 percent rather than the 100 percent we had before, and I do think there's a few minor things that have to be tweaked. Some of the fees don't quite make sense, and I would request that you consult with the DEP and the Coalition of Connecticut Sportsmen to get those right.

Thank you.

REP. ROY: Thank you, Dale. There's a lot of talk going on. There's several bills that are out there -- I think it's at least four -- and we're looking at every avenue, certainly, and we have a sportsman caucus right within the Legislature itself so that we kept abreast of what they think or what you think, I guess.

DALE MAY: Well, just if I could add one thing. My concern is the 100 percent fee increase that's now in place is so dramatic that it's actually going to generate less revenue than a 20 percent increase, and the result is you're going to lose a lot of your constituents on top of it.

REP. ROY: I would say the vast majority of the Legislature agrees with you.

Any other questions? Representative Miner?

REP. MINER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good afternoon, Dale.

To what extent do you think timing is important as we consider this legislation?

DALE MAY: Well, I can use myself as an example. I've bought a hunting and fishing license ever since I was a boy. This is the first year I haven't bought one, and I think a lot of sportsmen are contemplating that right now. They're waiting to see what's going to happen this year, and I think if something doesn't happen this year, you're going to lose a lot of constituents who aren't going to come back. So, I understand it's a tough budget year, but this should be viewed as a revenue neutral situation. I don't even think the motor vehicle fines have to be part of this. I think you could honestly argue that reducing the fee structure is going to give you the same amount of revenue that you'll get with the 100 percent fee increase.

REP. MINER: And, in terms of the timing, I agree with you that this year is imperative. I think some have suggested that there are certain benchmarks like the opening day of fishing season which (inaudible). Once you reach that point, my understanding is the agency is not in a position to refund the dollars if we were to make a decision two weeks later, so any sense of -- in your opinion would people just forego that opportunity at that time in the hopes that somebody would change something?

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DALE MAY: Personally, I think the impact is much bigger on hunters because hunters have a whole string of permits that are affected. Fishermen basically have one license to buy, and they'll make that decision, but now that I'm retired, I haven't even thought about the whole issue of refunds. If someone buys a license in February for \$50 and it's reduced to \$30, does the state owe him a refund or are they out of luck?

REP. MINER: I think we've been told by the agency that it would be almost physically impossible to track everybody down and refund the money.

DALE MAY: It seems like it would be.

REP. MINER: Okay. Thank you.

DALE MAY: Yes.

REP. MINER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. ROY: Any other questions or comments from members of the Committee? Seeing none, thank you very much.

Peter Degregorio followed by Maureen Griffin.

PETER DEGREGORIO: Hello, Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, and Members of the Environment Committee. My name is Peter Degregorio. I own and operate Dee's Bait and Tackle. It's a fishing tackle store in the greater New Haven area. We've been in business over 53 years.

SB207

Last year, my store alone sold over 4,200 of the fishing and hunting combination licenses. I feel to be a good representative of the general public. Attached to my statement is an agent's sales report. You can see how many

licenses I've sold. Basically, it amounts to -- I've sold probably for every 60 fresh water licenses sold in this state, I sell one. I sell -- I sold one out of every 20 salt water licenses sold in the state.

I come under three hats, one as a small businessman. The fee increases are going to devastate my business as well as a lot of the other small tackle shops. How many are going to go out of business because of it? Our difficult economy, it's tough to make ends meet, everything going up. You start taking 20 percent of our sales away, it's going to kill us.

The second is as a tax payer. You're making a big mistake. It's Economics 101, supply and demand. People aren't going to buy the licenses, a lot of people aren't. You will sell some. There are some hard core fishermen and hunters that will buy it, but a lot of them won't. Increased fees, you're putting a barrier to the new people coming into the sport. You're also making it difficult for people of lower income. It's a disproportionate tax.

You're counting on \$4.3 million which, quite honestly, you're not going to get it. I see it in the general public. You will get some of that, but a lot of people aren't going to buy the license. I for one, I haven't bought one, and I'm refusing to buy one as a statement. I'm not saying I'll go fishing without a license, but I'm not going to buy a license this year unless the fees are down.

You realize that fishermen generate millions of dollars in revenue to go fishing or hunting. Every time you go, you spend money. Probably 50 percent of our boat owners in this

state are fishermen.

And, then, you know, this tough time is going to hurt our state deficit even more because you're going to take all of the money that's generated, and that's just the tip of the iceberg. I have customers that spend, you know, fifty, \$100,000 on a boat. Look at the sales tax you get. You're not going to get that if they're not fishing, and we're looking at creating new fishermen.

This fee increase, you're planting the seeds of a desert. In the next 20 years, there will be hardly anybody in the industry, anybody in sport fishing, just the old-timers.

The second and third as a human being, at what cost is this? How many children aren't going to go fishing because of it? How many under-privileged, low socio-economically challenged people won't be able to go fishing because of it? And, you're rolling back the fees would help.

I support Bill 207, but the salt water license fee going back to \$30 is really a burden because up until eight months ago, you could fish in salt water for free. It was always a low-entry level, inexpensive entry level to get somebody into fishing.

REP. ROY: Can you wrap up there, Peter?

PETER DEGREGORIO: Yes. I'm fine. What I was going to say is for our state deficit, why don't we just take a lesson from all the fishing and hunting clubs? Why don't they just assess everybody in the state a certain fee like anybody on a \$50,000 income, a one-time assessment. If you make \$50,000 taxable income, five dollars; 100,000, ten

dollars. Why should we bear the burden, a select few bear the burden for the entire state?

Tennis players don't have to buy licenses; golfers don't have to buy licenses. And, that's basically it.

REP. ROY: Thank you. We'll pass your ideas on to the Finance Committee.

Any other comments or questions?  
Representative Lambert?

REP. LAMBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Did you find a lot of people buying a combination license for the inland and the marine or just separate licenses so far?

PETER DEGREGORIO: I haven't sold as many combination this year. A lot of people are holding off because most people buy hunting licenses -- the hunting season starts in October. A lot of people don't hunt in January, and I've informed them that if it does go down, your money won't be refunded.

REP. LAMBERT: Are you expecting a good opening day?

PETER DEGREGORIO: It depends.

REP. LAMBERT: (Inaudible.)

PETER DEGREGORIO: It depends -- it depends if this Committee, if we could get the prices down, yes, it will help. If not, you know, you're creating a state of civil disobedience. A lot of people really are not going to buy the license, and that's going to cause people to break the law.

REP. LAMBERT: And, you mentioned the children, and I really -- that's a pastime for them, but what's the age limit that they have to get a license?

PETER DEGREGORIO: Sixteen.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any other questions or comments? Representative Miner?

REP. MINER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm not sure that it's in this bill, but there has been some discussion about whether we could look to reducing the age, beginning age, and maybe increasing the adult age and come up with a -- what you referred to as more of a youth license. Any feel for any of that creativity?

PETER DEGREGORIO: I'm not clear. You're saying the charges. You're going to raise the limit so like maybe 18 won't have to buy a license or you want to charge youths for a license?

REP. MINER: There isn't -- I'm thinking within this bill there's any proposal, but as some of us have looked at what other states do around us, it has occurred to some of us that there are different fee structures for different age groups, and that it may have been an opportunity to try and get some fee at the beginning end and then at the back end reduce the fee so that you would have an age group of 15 to 17 that would be considered youth as opposed to adult the way we conduct it now at 16.

I don't know whether individuals you deal with in the New Haven area have thought about that, if that's been any topic of conversation,

because many people that I know that hunt and fish, hunt and fish in other places other than Connecticut, and it may just be one of the things that we could look at.

The other question I have for you is that many of the states have different combination licenses. They offer build-ons for the non-resident day fee so instead of having a one-day and a three-day in a non-resident season, they have probably four or five steps along the way.

Do you ever have people come to Connecticut and come to your shop and say, "Boy, I wish we had an X license that we don't have"?

PETER DEGREGORIO: Yes, that wouldn't hurt, but the problem is right now we're talking out-of-state licenses. I can go to Massachusetts and buy an out-of-state license cheaper than I can buy my resident license here.

REP. MINER: Right. I'm not -- I understand the fee issue. I'm talking about while we're looking at the fee issue --

PETER DEGREGORIO: Yes.

REP. MINER: -- if we had a means of expanding what we offer, I think some of us are feeling that this the opportunity and then if we're going to pass a bill and we're going to be successful in rolling back the fees, at the same time there's some out-of-state fishermen that would say to us, "You've got a one-day, you've got a three-day, but if I go to Canada, I can get a ten-day, and that would allow me to come back and forth and fish for stripers five times while I'm here, or fish for something else," and I didn't know if that --

people had suggested to you that maybe in our menu pricing we might come up with a few other categories that would be helpful.

PETER DEGREGORIO: That would be helpful. One other thing -- I don't mean to keep you, but one other thing you might consider (inaudible). A lot of boat owners wouldn't mind spending a little more money for a salt water license if it was a boat license. I believe Pennsylvania has that, where you could take somebody, buy the license for your boat, and then you could take an unlicensed fisherman on the boat fishing. This allows you to take your neighbor, that person, that one-time deal to go out on the boat.

REP. MINER: That's a great recommendation. We actually made that to the federal government, and they ix-nayed it, so -- but I would be glad to talk to you about that.

PETER DEGREGORIO: Pennsylvania has it.  
(Inaudible.)

REP. MINER: Yeah. Well, I know. Thank you.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any other questions or comments? Thank you very much, sir.

PETER DEGREGORIO: Thank you.

REP. ROY: Maureen Griffin followed by Kathy Noyes-LeBlanc. You're a very patient lady.

MAUREEN GRIFFIN: (Inaudible) because I haven't had anything to eat all day. I've been sitting here, listening to everything.

Senator Meyer, Rep. Roy, and Members of the Environment Committee, I am testifying in opposition to Senate Bill 274 as it is

BILL DARCY: Yes.

REP. CHAPIN: -- because I do think that the two pictures that we've seen today throughout the course of this public hearing is that there are some people who act very irresponsibly, and we've got pictures of that, and then we've got people who act very responsibly, and we've got pictures and testimony to that effect.

So, I do think, you know, I think it's -- you know, although there's only a few of us here now, people are still in their offices, people did receive your written testimony, and I do appreciate your taking the time to come out here and join us for the day and part of the evening to express your current -- your thoughts, so thank you very much, and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

BILL DARCY: Thank you, Representative.

REP. ROY: Thank you. Any other questions or comments? Thank you very much, Dave.

David Proulx, and he'll be followed by Bruce Tolhurst.

DAVID J. PROULX: Good afternoon, Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, and Members of the Environment Committee, thanks for giving me the opportunity to speak to you today regarding Raised Senate Bill 207.

I come before you as a member of the board of directors of the Connecticut Waterfowler's Association. In that role, I'm also our delegate to the DEP Commissioner's Conservation Advisory Council. I'm an avid sportsman and a father of three children who are active participants in the outdoor sports

in Connecticut, and we live in balmy Farmington, which is not very cold compared to other parts of the state.

My message to you today is very simple, and it is as follows:

The budget and associated fee structure passed by the General Assembly in 2009 will have dire, long-term impacts on Connecticut's fish and wildlife and will ultimately cost the state money. Therefore, I urge you to enact fee structure changes in 2010 that will restore a fair mechanism that will sustain funding for our fish and wildlife resources.

With that in mind specifically, CWA and other sportsmen believe that there are three items that need to be addressed. Number one, develop a fee structure that's reasonable and comparable with neighboring states.

Given the fiscal challenges facing Connecticut, sportsmen had expressed in 2009 a willingness to share the pain and support an increase of up to 25 percent in many of the fees. However, the 2009 legislation doubled most fees and raised others even higher. A fee increase of this magnitude is unreasonable and indefensible, disproportionately affecting certain segments of the public including families, seniors and low-income citizens.

Even worse, the new fee structure creates a severe impediment to recruiting new sportsmen, and if you followed the trends in license sales over the last ten years, there's a downward trend in license sales. I believe it will be exacerbated by a hundred percent increase in fees.

And, I believe that nearly everyone agrees

that recruitment is a critical step to maintaining and continuing the fisheries and wildlife successes of the past century.

Due to the magnitude of the fee increases, many people will stop fishing and hunting altogether or take their business out of state, and I have personal experience as well as a lot of anecdotal evidence to support this contention.

By outpricing the market -- and Connecticut is, in fact, a statistical outlier with the current fee structure -- it will drive away sportsmen who have historically funded wildlife and fisheries management, and then without the base of revenue generating sportsmen, we'll have difficulty in sustaining our programs.

My last two points are we ask to restore the conservation fund and other special funds that have been established by statute and restore the public's trust in the government's commitment to help the fish and wildlife populations, and my written testimony includes items to support my contention: Background and accomplishments with the Duck Stamp program, sportsman fee increase impacts based on the 2003 increase, and so to do that, I ask you to support the concept of lowering the fees with the amended language in the CCS 25 percent increase submitted by Bob Crook.

REP. ROY: Thank you very much. Any questions or comments from members of the Committee? Seeing none, Dave, thank you.

DAVID J. PROULX: Thank you.

REP. ROY: Next, Frank DeFelice? Bruce Tolhurst?

**JOINT  
STANDING  
COMMITTEE  
HEARINGS**

**ENVIRONMENT  
PART 5  
1346 – 1678**

**2010**

✓  
**Testimony on Senate Bill # 207: An Act Concerning Recent Increases in Hunting and Fishing Licenses and Amending Certain Motor Vehicle Fines.**  
**Public Hearing Date (Environment Committee):** March 8, 2010  
**Submitted by:** Dale May (Certified Wildlife Biologist), PO Box 165 Hampton, CT

I am here today to **strongly support the concept of Senate Bill 207: An Act Concerning Recent Increases in Hunting and Fishing Licenses and Amending Certain Motor Vehicle Fines.** This bill would develop a more reasonable fee structure for Connecticut's recreational sportsmen, thereby enhancing the state's natural resources.

With more than 30 years of experience in the wildlife profession, I am acutely aware that license and permit fees paid by recreational fishermen and hunters in combination with federal excise taxes generated by these same constituents represent nearly all of the revenue devoted to Connecticut's fish and wildlife, including nongame species. For nearly a century, this "user-pay" model has been enormously successful in generating predictable annual budgets that have been used to restore and manage many of our wildlife species.

However, in the face of an aging sportsmen demographic and broadening wildlife-related mandates, natural resource agencies across the United States have identified two steps that need to be taken to sustain wildlife programs and their funding:

1. Increase efforts to recruit and retain sportsmen.
2. Broaden the sportsmen conservation model by developing mechanisms to include additional "user-pay" constituents.

Shockingly, by doubling sportsmen's fees and eliminating the Conservation Fund and other dedicated wildlife funds during the 2009 Session, the General Assembly has taken steps in the exact opposite direction and dealt wildlife conservation a crippling blow. Immediate corrective legislation is required and **S.B. 207** is a good starting point.

The 100% fee increase adopted in 2009 is simply indefensible. The increase has created a fee structure so disproportionate to other states (many of which offer superior hunting and angling opportunities) that it will greatly accelerate the decline in participation in hunting and fishing in Connecticut. Many individuals will choose to hunt or fish out of state or greatly curtail the type and number of permits they purchase here. As such, the 100% fee increase is a money loser rather than a revenue gainer. And it represents a serious impediment to youths, families and the next generation of conservation-supporting sportsmen. It has dire consequences for the future funding of wildlife programs.

A 20-25% increase in fees (over 2008 levels) would be more acceptable and would result in a lower attrition rate of sportsmen. In fact, the attrition rate created by the 100% increase passed in 2009 would likely be so high that it would generate less total revenue than the fee structure proposed in S.B. 207. As such, rolling back the fee increase to 20-25% should be viewed as a revenue-neutral change with the added advantage of retaining more sportsmen. Therefore, I question whether the reduction in sportsmen's fees needs to be offset by an increase in motor vehicle fines.

In reviewing the language of S.B. 207 I noted some inconsistencies in the proposed new fees indicating that some fine-tuning is required. I would suggest that the Legislature allow the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to have input on the dollar value of the various licenses, tags and permits addressed in the bill. Staff at DEP has expertise and knowledge that would be invaluable in establishing reasonable costs.

Despite many resounding successes in restoring individual species over the past century, much of Connecticut's wildlife and its habitats are imperiled. If we are truly serious about preserving the state's biodiversity, we need to learn from the past. Wise land use, habitat protection and science-based management consistently funded and practiced is the recipe for success. Rather than pricing sportsmen out of the equation, we need to make a concerted effort to retain them while recruiting other constituents to strengthen and broaden the user-pay model.

I am also very concerned that many of the dedicated funds that were established to benefit wildlife have been swept to the General Fund. Many of these accounts (wildlife license plate, duck stamp, wildlife income tax checkoff, marine fishing license) were created at the request of those paying in. The loss of these funds is a strong disincentive to any future citizen-supported initiatives.

For decades, Connecticut has been over-reliant on sportsmen to fund wildlife programs that benefit everyone. Until a new mechanism is developed that will provide consistent and predictable funding, it is critical that we retain the revenue generated by sportsmen. Adopting a fairer and more reasonable sportsmen's fee structure and restoring the wildlife-dedicated accounts will not deepen the State's deficit. However, they are necessary actions that must be taken by the Legislature this year to retain the funding base for Connecticut's wildlife programs.



**FISHERIES ADVISORY COUNCIL** - A group of dedicated citizens from all regions of the state working together for fish and fishing in Connecticut.

March 4, 2010

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE**

Testimony of Dr. Vincent P. Ringrose, Chairman, FISHERIES ADVISORY COUNCIL.

Re: RAISED BILL SB207

Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, and members of the Environmental Committee:

I wish to testify on the behalf of the Fisheries Advisory Council of the DEP concerning proposed SB207.

The FAC is an umbrella organization representing 40 organizations and affiliates throughout the State that advises the DEP on all matters pertaining to fisheries conservation and management, both in fresh and marine waters.

Fishermen in the State, like all sportsmen, have been willing participants in moderate raises in license fees every few years or so to cover cost increases. However, in this case we believe that it is essential that the recent fee increases be rolled back to a reasonable level. Without the rollbacks in SB207, the doubling of license fees will cause two potentially devastating changes in sportfishing in this State.

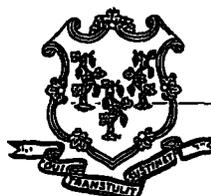
First, there will be a drop-off of participants. This impact will be most pronounced among young anglers aged 16-21. These anglers are likely to stop fishing, thereby adversely affecting the long-term viability of the sport of fishing and the license revenue stream to the State of Connecticut. Second, there will be a severe financial impact on businesses which sell fishing tackle, bait tackle and fishing services. In both cases, loss of income to the State over the long-term will be noticeable.

The new Marine license had wisely been kept at ten dollars to be consistent with neighboring states. The raise to thirty dollars in SB207 is totally out of line. In fact, a \$30 license will result in out-of-state anglers being able to fish Connecticut's marine waters for considerably less than our own state residents.

In summary, the FAC urges you to roll back the doubled fees to moderate increases, and to keep the Marine license at ten dollars.

We will be happy to provide any assistance we can to further this goal in conjunction with your efforts.

Thank you for listening to this testimony.



## State of Connecticut

### SENATE

STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

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SELECT COMMITTEE ON AGING

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GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE

### Environment Committee

John A. Kissel, State Senator, 7th District

March 8, 2010

***Re: SB 207 AAC Recent Increases in Hunting and Fishing Licenses and Amending Certain Motor Vehicle Fines.***

Good morning Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, Senator McKinney, Representative Chapin and members of the Environment Committee. Thank you for raising SB 207 An Act Concerning Recent Increases in Hunting and Fishing Licenses and Amending Certain Motor Vehicle Fines. I appreciate the opportunity to speak on behalf of this legislation of which I am a co-sponsor. Last year the state budget agreement included language that doubled hunting and fishing license fees. SB 207, as currently written, would partially reduce the license fee increases. This would provide some welcome relief to sportsmen, whose love for the outdoors is being exploited for the State's financial gain.

As you know, I proposed legislation this year that would have completely repealed the increases in hunting fees that were a part of last year's budget. I do not believe the budget should have been balanced on the backs of sportsmen, a significant number of which are elderly. Realistically, many sportsmen may forgo purchasing licenses because they simply cannot afford them. I do not want to see a situation where long-time license holders get penalized with heavy fines because they are not able to afford to buy a license this year.

I have spoken with several sportsmen in my district, most of whom are conservationists. They willingly pay their hunting and fishing license fees because they know the money is being used to protect the environment in which they enjoy their sport. They also acknowledge that they share some responsibility to help resolve the State's budget problem, even though they didn't create it. They have pointed out to me that doubling the fees will significantly reduce the number of licenses sold and defeat the reason for the increase. That is why I believe SB 207 is a good compromise.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my testimony. I believe we should do everything possible to decrease fees for fishing and hunting licenses. This bill represents a good start. I hope the committee will act favorably on this proposal and ensure that even during these difficult economic conditions sportsmen will still be able to take part in the outdoor activities they enjoy.

# COALITION OF CONNECTICUT SPORTSMEN

P.O. Box 2506, Hartford, CT 06146, (203) 245-8076

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Testimony presented to the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

## ON S.B. No. 207 AN ACT CONCERNING RECENT INCREASES IN HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSES AND AMENDING CERTAIN MOTOR VEHICLE FINES.

by Robert T. Crook, Director

March 8, 2010

### We urge you to Support Substitute language submitted to you by e-mail

We OPPOSE the Bill Language – it again raises Marine Fishing Resident to \$30 (line 28) which impacts many other combination licenses, Does not allow flexibility in the Pheasant program, increases previous 2009 fees by only 20%, and reduces some commercial fees. SUPPORT Concept of Lowering Fees. SUPPORT Substitute Language Reducing Fees to 25% over previous 2009 fees - accepted by sportsmen, additional Supersport, and other new licenses. We urge you to review the CCS website under “Hot Issues” for Substitute language and other data <http://www.ctsportsmen.com> relating to this testimony.

The 100% increase in ALL Licenses/Fees impacts the public differently: (1) Business fees are a pass through to the consumer. 2) One time fees (Birth certificates, death, Court costs, Drivers licenses, etc.) are legal necessities. (3) Sportsmen’s Fees are Recreational and are voluntary discretionary income purchases.

The 100% fees are not competitive/balanced with surrounding/regional state fees (Tables on CCS Website), and will promote many CT sportsmen to hunt/fish in adjoining states and reduce to a virtual zero CT non-resident licenses. The result: a loss in both resident and tourism revenue impacting small businesses, sales tax revenue, corporate taxes, diminish CT as a friendly state, and most important, reduce fish and wildlife management. There will be a serious CT retention loss and no appreciable recruitment.

Junior licenses, this bill, are reduced to a reasonable fee and will benefit recreation and program recruitment.

A table on the CCS website Fishing & Hunting License Sales 1989-2008 demonstrates attrition rates under the normal 10 year cycle (last fee increase 2003, @ 40%) and a dramatic 20 year attrition rate. The 100% increase will cause significantly higher participation losses. Increased fees promote attrition and will impact fishing Boat purchases and registration, a revenue loss in sales and gas taxes, and marina sales/repair. Fewer hunters and fishermen also impact aquaculture commercial trout hatcheries and pheasant farms located in the state. Many Small business owners retailing to Hunting, Fishing, Boating, and related activities, anticipating the impact of sales reductions/nonparticipation/reduced recruitment, have concluded their businesses will not survive.

A major concern is enforcement. ENCON Police are staffed in the 40s of which 10 are in leadership or administrative positions. 30+ are available for state-wide field enforcement 24/7 minus sick, vacation, certification, and administrative time. Sportsmen are firm believers in adherence to the law, but some on the margin may tilt to inappropriate behavior by not purchasing licenses due to inadequate enforcement.

Sportsmen recognize the fiscal problem the state is facing. We promoted a 25% increase in 2009, broke the 10 year fee cycle, and thought that reasonable and a compromise. Expecting sportsmen will pay the 100% fees is optimistic and those with modest financial means will no longer participate. Many, who previously purchased a broad spectrum of licenses, supporting conservation, will limit licenses to Only those actually needed and used.

The 100% fees are well above virtually all other states, and will prompt many to participate elsewhere. The doubling of fees may have a short term positive revenue impact, but will incur a long term negative to the state and particularly to the DEP. Thank you.

March 8, 2010

SB-207

**AN ACT CONCERNING RECENT INCREASES IN HUNTING AND FISHING  
LICENSES AND AMENDING CERTAIN MOTOR VEHICLE FINES.**

Hello Co-Chairs Rep. Roy and Sen. Meyer, members of the Environment Committee. I firmly oppose any increases of the hunting and fishing licensing fees. The 50% increase just on resident fishing licensing is totally uncalled for and unacceptable. The state is passing on the burdens of the financial mess to people like me and thousands of others who enjoy the great sport of fishing.

The licensing fee increases have caused many problems you may not be aware of. Now, I can buy a NON RESIDENT fishing license from Massachusetts for less then I would pay for a resident fishing license in my own state CT! This does not make sense and discourages people from enjoying Connecticut's rich natural resources.

This year I will NOT buy the Connecticut fishing license and will drive across the border in Massachusetts and use their fishing areas. I live on the border anyway so this will not inconvenience me as it would other residents.

Below, I have enclosed a variety of articles on what other states are doing in regard to sportsmen's fees. I also included my responses to question some of the articles posed. If you are not familiar with this issue, please read the following documents and you will see the enormous negative impact the fee increases are causing.

Sincerely,

Bob Roy  
18 Circle Drive  
Enfield, CT 06082

**QUINN RAISES FEES ON FISHING, HUNTING - SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS**

By MIKE RIOPELL, JG/T-C Springfield Bureau

SPRINGFIELD — Hunting and fishing in Illinois will be more expensive next year.

Gov. Pat Quinn has finalized plans to hike fees for hunting and fishing licenses. The law setting higher prices for the various outdoors licenses and permits takes effect Jan. 1.

With the state facing a huge budget deficit, Quinn proposed the fee hikes earlier this year. The increases could bring the state Department of Natural Resources about \$3 million a year, spokeswoman Stacy Solano said.

Among the changes, the new law raises the cost of a fishing license from \$12.50 to \$14.50. A deer permit goes from \$15 to \$25, and hunting licenses rise from \$7 to \$12.

**"These fees will help the agency's efforts to enhance conservation opportunities, improve quality recreation and bolster efforts to generate more nature-based tourism dollars while also providing the people of Illinois with great outdoor experiences," Solano said.**

No increase in fees comes without at least some controversy. But state Rep. Dan Reitz, a Steeleville Democrat and the leader of sportsmen lawmakers, said the increases are acceptable if used for outdoors programs overseen by the Department of Natural Resources.

**"The governor's office assured us that all the money generated would stay in the department," Reitz said.**

Lawmakers approved the hikes earlier this year, and Quinn signed the legislation late Friday afternoon.

Part of Quinn's original proposal was charging state park visitors \$5 per car. That fee isn't part of the legislation signed Friday, and Solano said it's unclear if Quinn will proceed with the idea.

There currently is no charge to visit a state park.

The legislation is Senate Bill 1846.

Bob Roy's response:

**Will Connecticut's money from the hunting and fishing fees go into the right department or into the general fund?**

**How can they only go up 1.16% and we have to go up 50% ?**

**MICHIGAN HUNTING & FISHING LICENSES - BARGAINS TOO GOOD TO  
BE TRUE**

By John Bebow, The Center for Michigan

October 19, 2007

Michigan boasts some of the very best hunting and fishing anywhere in the United States. Anglers and hunters vote with their waders and boots. Only two states (Texas and Pennsylvania) have more hunters than Michigan. Only four other states (Minnesota, Florida, Texas, and California) have more anglers than Michigan. |

So, do Michigan hunters and anglers pay a high price for top-notch recreation? Are their hunting and fishing licenses expensive? Absolutely not. The average angler in Michigan pays \$19.68 per year for a license. The average hunter pays \$35.28. Few, if any, states have better hunting and fishing than Michigan. But 39 states have cheaper hunting and 21 states have cheaper fishing (*see charts below*). Michigan hasn't increased its hunting and fishing license fees since 1996. Because of inflation, you'd need a dollar and thirty-three cents today to buy what cost a dollar in 1996. If you're going to buy a new truck to go up north and go hunting or fishing, it'll cost you thousands of dollars more today than it did in 1996. And filling the gas tank in that truck will cost you xxxxxx what it did 11 years ago. But fishing's a bigger bargain than ever. A bargain too good to be true. An unsustainable bargain. For many months, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the state's leading outdoor recreation lobbying group, the Michigan United Conservation Clubs, have pleaded with legislators to raise fishing license fees to support conservation officers who patrol our forests, lakes and streams to stop poachers and polluters, biologists who make sure those lands, waters, fish and game are healthy, habitat improvement projects, and many other routine costs of doing business if we're going to properly preserve and enhance the bountiful natural resources that cause so many people to hunt and fish in Michigan to begin with.

Hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing is, after all, a \$4 billion-a-year business in Michigan and will continue to be vibrant part of the Michigan economy – unless we ruin our woods and waters through

disinvestment. Under the hunting and fishing license increases proposed by the DNR (and supported by MUCC), anglers would pay \$40 per year for an all species license and \$30 per year for a firearm deer license. Licenses for out-of-state visitors would increase from \$42 to \$80 to fish and from \$138 to \$165 to shoot deer.

But legislators – apparently trembling at the No-Tax Bogeyman and recall threats – this month told

Michigan Natural Resources Commission Chairman Keith Charters that he can forget about it. License fee increases aren't going to happen. "We got a lot of sympathy, but you can't put sympathy between two slices of bread," Charters told the

MIRS news service last week. "Without a solution, draconian things will happen in November." Maybe legislators figure those lakes, streams, and wildlife habitats -- and the \$4 billion economy they produce -- will just take care of themselves.

***Bob Roy's response:***

***Seems Michigan's legislators have figured it is better to bring more people into the state and profit by that then by adding 50% increase in fees.***

**SPORTSMEN LICENSING FEE INCREASES FROM TEXAS:**

*Did you know that 100% of your hunting and fishing license fees go to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for on-the-ground conservation efforts that help make Texas one of the best places in the country to hunt and fish? Fish stocking, wildlife management, habitat restoration, land conservation, and Texas Game Wardens are just some of the initiatives funded in part by your license fees. Thank you for your investment in Texas' natural resources.*

*For more information on the types of licenses available, where you can purchase a license, hunting and fishing rules and regulations, and much more, explore the links on the left side of your screen.*

*If you have questions regarding the online sales application, please email [license@tpwd.state.tx.us](mailto:license@tpwd.state.tx.us) or call (800) 792-1112, Menu 4, Option 1.*

**Bob Roy's response:**

Again I want to ask, does 100% of the fees go into the general fund or to the DEP which stocks the wonderful fishing areas of our state?

**NEW FISHING LICENSE FEES GO INTO EFFECT SATURDAY – FLORIDA**

07/31/09 - 02:49 PM – Associated Press

**Tallahassee, Fla:**

Shoreline saltwater fishing is no longer free in Florida. Starting tomorrow (Saturday), a new saltwater license takes effect for Floridians.

The new shoreline license is getting mixed reviews from anglers.

It costs \$9 a year and is required for Florida residents who go saltwater fishing from the shore or a pier. But if you buy the state's regular fishing license for \$17, you can fish from either the shore or a boat. State lawmakers created the new shoreline license mainly because the federal government is planning to establish its own licensing requirement in 2011 and it will be more expensive than Florida's \$9 annual fee. So state officials say anglers will actually save money under Florida's new fishing rules. Lee Schlesinger of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission says you may want to buy the more expensive \$17 saltwater fishing license if you plan to do any fishing from a boat.

"The new shoreline license for Florida residents is good for a person who feels like they're never really going to go on a boat and fish. If you think you may want to go on a boat sometime during the year and fish, probably the regular fishing license is the best bet for you," Schlesinger said. "I think it's ridiculous. People are trying to make ends meet as it is right now with the economy what it is and for them to cause people to have to go out there and buy a license so they can go out and catch fish that a lot of people go out and eat, I think that's pushing the limit right now," Rick Looney said.

"As long as the money is put in a proper fund and is transferred to youth programs and fisheries, I don't have a problem with it," David Fletcher said. Angler Rick Looney calls the shoreline license ridiculous. He says a lot of people are struggling to make ends meet right now so the state should not force them to spend more money on a brand new license. On the other side of the issue, David Fletcher says he doesn't have a problem with the shoreline license as long as the money is used to promote youth fishing programs and fisheries. Schlesinger says all of the cash will go to Florida's fishing programs. There are some exemptions for the new license, including children 16 and under, senior citizens, disabled people, anyone who gets government assistance and active-duty soldiers on leave. Also, you're exempt if you use a fishing pole in your home county that does not have a reel or other line retrieval mechanism. Fines will range up to \$70, but Schlesinger says officers will focus on raising awareness of the new license during the first few months of the program.

Read more:

[http://www.panhandleparade.com/index.php/mbb/article/new\\_fishing\\_license\\_fees\\_go\\_into\\_effect\\_saturday/mbb7718027/#ixzz0hKjVPuBp](http://www.panhandleparade.com/index.php/mbb/article/new_fishing_license_fees_go_into_effect_saturday/mbb7718027/#ixzz0hKjVPuBp)

Bob Roy's response:

why is it we are paying \$40.00 again? and again I ask is all the money from these fees in Ct. going into the general fund? If so why?

**BLOG ON HUNTING AND FISHING**

Somehow, during all of the economic turmoil of this past year, some Connecticut politicians got it in their heads that maybe they could skim a few extra bucks from non-resident anglers who fish in CT.

I don't know all the background information yet, but sometime during the past few months the cost of a non-resident CT freshwater fishing license jumped from \$40 to \$80, a 100% price increase.

I don't have proof yet to back up my opinion, but I'm more than willing to bet that this makes CT one of the most expensive states in the country to buy a non-resident fishing license. Heck, I'm even willing to bet that they're *THE* most expensive state in the country. Obviously, as an angler, I find this to be completely ridiculous, and even offensive.. Believe me... I fully understand that the state government needs to raise much-needed income, but to force a 100% price increase in license fees and try to squeeze it out of anglers is one of the most moronic things I've seen in a long time (except for Obama's so-called healthcare reform. But that's another story.) I'll be doing some research during the coming weeks to get more information on this. I'll also be formulating a plan to combat this and make the voices of non-resident anglers heard in CT. This obviously slid through the greasy halls of lawmakers unopposed by anglers, apparently due to ignorance on the part of the anglers. Chalk up another sneaky, underhanded law on the part of our wonderful state legislators.

Stay tuned for more info on this subject during the coming weeks. I hope to be able to put together an effort that will, at the very least, give us a means of signing a petition that can be sent to CT lawmakers to express our opinion on this issue.

"In times of economic stress, many people turn to simple, outdoor pursuits that are easy to do, are close to home, are not expensive and can be enjoyed by everyone in the family," said Jeff Pontius, president, ZEBCO Brands and ASA's Board of Directors chairman. "Recreational fishing certainly fits that description. We know from past experience that in recessionary times, fishing retains, and even increases, in its popularity."

**Bob's response:**

Notice how it says NOT EXPENSIVE?????

I'm Peter Degregorio owner of Dee's Bait & Tackle retail store New Haven for over 53years. In 2009 I sold 4,200 fishing Licenses + combination fishing/hunting licenses. Speaking on bill 207 LCO # 01162EMV I will be addressing you under three Hats.

1<sup>st</sup>

**As a small business man, the increase in fishing and hunting licenses fees will be devastating to my business as well as the entire industry. I have already felt a decline in sales as a result of the increased license fees. How many small fishing tackle shops are you willing to let go out of business.**

2<sup>nd</sup>

**As a tax payer, what are you people thinking of? The fishing industry pumps millions of dollars into the state economy. It's economics' 101, elasticity of demand the more you charge the less you sell. Fewer fishermen equal less tax dollars coming in. With your short sightedness you are planting the seeds of a desert. The increased license fees are putting a barrier to new and economically charged participants. You're counting on \$4.3million from increased fees which was calculated with the expectation of full participation; you're not going to get it. You spent \$4.3 million of which you won't get the full amount and it will cause a bigger deficit. Plus all the tax dollars that won't be generated by the people you stopped from fishing. For instance over 50% of the boats register in this state belong to fisherman. This is the kind of economics that has given us a state deficit.**

3<sup>rd</sup>

**As a human being, at what cost? Do you know how many children won't be able to go fishing now because of the increase as well as the socio economically challenged. It is unfair tax to poor people, many fish to feed their families. How many inner city kids will we take off the water and put back into the streets.**

**The rolling back of the fishing and hunting fee's will only work if you keep the marine licenses at \$10, as it is the \$10 fee is already a burden. Considering eight months ago it didn't cost anything to go salt water fishing. Salt water fishing has always been a low cost entry level sport for participation. A \$30 fee will devastate the sport, along with those who use fishing as a valuable food source, not to mention put me out of business.**

**Remember golfers tennis players, bicyclist and so on don't have to buy licenses to pursue their sports. You are singling out a select group to bare the entire states economic burden.**

**In 2009 my store sold over \$63,000 fishing and combo licenses and, collected over 10,000 in sales tax, another 8,000 for property taxes and so on.**

**Be fair, take a lesson from fishing and hunting clubs do a one time assessment for all the tax payers in the state and make it progressive. Lets say a \$5 tax for every \$50,000 in taxable income, so \$50,000 pays \$5, \$100,000 pays \$10 and so on a small amount for everyone rather than a large amount for only a few.**

**You are getting a second chance to correct a big mistake please do the right thing.**

Peter  
DeGregorio

✓

## Agent Sales Report

Agent ID: 3870 - DEE'S BAIT & TACKLE  
93 CLAY ST  
NEW HAVEN CT 06513 Sales From 12/1/2008 To 12/31/2009

| Qty  | Item  | ItemFee   |
|------|---|-----------|
| 10   | 3 DAY INLAND FISHING LICENSE (NON-RESIDENT ONLY)      | 160.00    |
| 5    | ALL WATERS SPORT FISHING AND FIREARMS HUNTING LICENSE | 30.00     |
| 25   | ANNUAL RESIDENT FIREARMS LICENSE-AGE 65 PLUS          | 0.00      |
| 254  | ANNUAL RESIDENT INLAND FISHING LICENSE-AGE 65 PLUS    | 0.00      |
| -2   | ANNUAL RESIDENT INLAND FISHING LICENSE-AGE 65 PLUS    | 0.00      |
| 237  | ANNUAL RESIDENT OVER 65 FREE MARINE FISHING LICENSE   | 0.00      |
| -2   | ANNUAL RESIDENT OVER 65 FREE MARINE FISHING LICENSE   | 0.00      |
| 3    | ANNUAL RESIDENT TRAPPING LICENSE-AGE 65 PLUS          | 0.00      |
| 35   | ARCHERY PERMIT DEER/SMALL GAME WITH DEER TAGS         | 1,260.00  |
| -1   | ARCHERY PERMIT DEER/SMALL GAME WITH DEER TAGS         | -30.00    |
| 18   | CT HIP PERMIT   | 50.00     |
| 2    | FAL 1 TRKPY FIREARMS PRIVATE LAND                     | 28.00     |
| 240  | FIREARMS HUNTING AND INLAND FISHING LICENSE           | 6,776.00  |
| -2   | FIREARMS HUNTING AND INLAND FISHING LICENSE           | -84.00    |
| 1    | FIREARMS HUNTING AND INLAND FISHING LICENSE (NR)      | 88.00     |
| 32   | FIREARMS HUNTING LICENSE                              | 658.00    |
| -1   | FIREARMS HUNTING LICENSE                              | -28.00    |
| 1820 | INLAND FISHING LICENSE                                | 36,560.00 |
| -2   | INLAND FISHING LICENSE                                | -40.00    |
| 3    | INLAND FISHING LICENSE (NON-RESIDENT)                 | 120.00    |
| 4    | JUNIOR FIREARMS HUNTING LICENSE                       | 12.00     |
| 13   | MIGRATORY BIRD CONSERVATION STAMP (AKA DUCK STAMP)    | 160.00    |
| 13   | MUZZLELOADER DEER PRIVATE LAND                        | 266.00    |
| -2   | MUZZLELOADER DEER PRIVATE LAND                        | -56.00    |
| 9    | MUZZLELOADER DEER STATE LAND                          | 210.00    |
| 35   | NON-RESIDENT MARINE FISHING LICENSE                   | 525.00    |
| 9    | PHEASANT TAGS   | 154.00    |
| -1   | PHEASANT TAGS   | -14.00    |
| 1588 | RESIDENT MARINE FISHING LICENSE                       | 15,920.00 |
| -17  | RESIDENT MARINE FISHING LICENSE                       | -170.00   |
| 9    | SHOTGUN DEER STATE LAND NO LOTTERY B                  | 224.00    |
| 16   | SHOTGUN RIFLE DEER PRIVATE LAND                       | 350.00    |
| 9    | SPRING TURKEY PRIVATE LAND FIREARMS/ARCHERY           | 126.00    |
| 7    | SPRING TURKEY STATE LAND FIREARMS/ARCHERY             | 98.00     |
| 2    | TRAPPING LICENSE                                      | 75.00     |

Net Sales: 63,698.00  
 Agent Retain Fee: 3,791.00  
 Canceled Transactions: -422.00

Connecticut



Waterfowl Association

4 Pine Tree Shilling  
Unionville, Ct. 06085  
March 8, 2010

CT DEP Environment Committee  
State Office Building  
Hartford, Ct.

Members of the Environment Committee:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you regarding SB 207. I come before you as a member of the board of directors of the Ct Waterfowler's Assn, a delegate to the DEP Commissioner's Conservation Advisory Council, an avid sportsman and father of three children who are active participants in the outdoor sports in Connecticut.

My message to you today is very simple, and it is as follows: The budget passed by the General Assembly in September 2009 will have dire, long-term impacts on Connecticut's fish and wildlife and will ultimately cost the State money. "Catastrophic" is not too strong a term to describe the changes enacted in 2009. Therefore, I urge you to enact legislation in 2010 that will restore a fair mechanism that will sustain funding for our fish and wildlife resources.

Specifically, there are three items that need to be addressed:

1. **Develop a fee-structure that is reasonable and comparable with neighboring states.** Given the fiscal crisis, sportsmen had expressed a willingness to support an increase of up to 25% in many of their fees. However, the 2009 legislation doubled most sportsmen's fees and raised others even higher. A fee increase of this magnitude is unreasonable and indefensible, disproportionately affecting certain segments of the public including families, seniors, and low-income citizens. Even worse, the new fee structure creates a severe impediment to recruiting new sportsmen. Nearly everyone agrees that recruitment is a critical step to maintaining and continuing the fisheries and wildlife successes of the past century.

Due to the magnitude of the fee increases, many people will stop hunting and fishing altogether, or take their business out of state. By outpricing the market, you have driven away the sportsmen who historically have funded wildlife and fisheries management. Further, without a base of revenue-generating sportsmen, how will Connecticut manage

overabundant species such as deer, geese and beaver? Alternative wildlife management will become an expensive and inefficient proposition for the General Fund.

**2. Restore the Conservation Fund and other special funds that had been established by statute.** History has shown that fish and wildlife compete poorly for general funds when money is tight. Social programs, prisons, education, health care and other issues take priority. The Conservation Fund and special funds have created a highly successful "user-pay" system in which predictable annual funding is generated for fish and wildlife research, management and habitat protection.

Ironically, many of the fees that sportsmen pay were established at their own request. The myriad of deer and turkey permits, the pheasant stamp, the Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp, the new Marine Fishing license were supported by sportsmen with the understanding that the revenue would be reinvested in the fish and wildlife resources. By diverting these monies directly to the General Fund, sportsmen support for these fees and stamps has disappeared.

**3. Restore the public's trust in the government's commitment to healthy fish and wildlife populations.** The average Connecticut citizen cares about the health of fish and wildlife and assumes that their general tax dollars are benefitting those natural resources. However, in reality, most of the funding for those resources is generated by a very small public segment of society: the sportsmen.

Sportsmen, by paying for the privilege to use surplus game animals, have relished their role as the backbone of fish and wildlife conservation. Recently other groups have become incorporated into the "user-pay" conservation model through their advocacy for and participation in voluntary financial contributions, such as the Wildlife Income Tax Checkoff and the Wildlife Conservation License Plate. However, by sweeping the funds of accounts such as these and changing the wording of the statutes, many constituents have lost faith in the government's commitment to the fish and wildlife resources they hold dear.

The seriousness of the State's budgetary crisis can not be overstated, however we must also understand that this crisis can not be addressed by a "one size fits all" approach. The fish and wildlife successes of the past century have come at very little cost to the general public. Exacerbating the attrition of sportsmen by imposing unreasonable fees will doom future efforts to manage both game and nongame species and their habitats. I urge the General Assembly to review how that State's fish and wildlife programs are currently funded and thoroughly evaluate all of the consequences of the exorbitant fee increases and the elimination of dedicated conservation accounts.

I have also included additional written documentation that supports my contentions: The first is a fact sheet that provides historical information on the background and accomplishments of the Ct Duck Stamp program, and the second is a fiscal impact

document that provides a historical reference on the negative participation impact brought on by fee increases in Ct during the 2003 timeframe.

So, in conclusion, and with these thoughts in mind, I ask you to **OPPOSE** the current bill language and **SUPPORT** the concept of lowering fees by **SUPPORTING** the substitute language offered by the Coalition of Connecticut Sportsmen that reduces fees to a 25% increase over previous 2009 fee levels.

Sincerely,



David J. Proulx  
Unionville, Ct.

On behalf of the Ct Waterfowler's Association

**CONNECTICUT MIGRATORY BIRD CONSERVATION STAMP  
("DUCK STAMP") PROGRAM**

**FACT SHEET**

**Background**

- The Connecticut Duck Stamp Program was initiated primarily by concerned sportsmen in the early 1990s. They worked with the DEP to develop legislation that required hunters to purchase duck stamps in order to legally hunt waterfowl. The Program was modeled after the popular and successful Federal Duck Stamp Program that uses all revenues for wetland conservation. The intent was to generate funds for waterfowl habitat conservation in Connecticut through the sale of stamps and prints to hunters, stamp collectors and art enthusiasts.
- Beginning in 1993, hunters were required to purchase a \$5.00 Connecticut Duck Stamp to hunt waterfowl in Connecticut.
- The enabling legislation (CGS 26-27c), specifically mandated that all funds *...shall only be used for the development, management, preservation, conservation, acquisition, purchase and maintenance of waterfowl habitat and wetlands and the purchase or acquisition of recreational interests relating to migratory birds.*
- The sale of these stamps (and collector art prints from 1993 through 2003) has generated over \$1,200,000.
- In 2005, the DEP raised the price of the stamp to \$10.00 to generate additional funds for wetland conservation. This increase was strongly supported by waterfowl hunters who were pleased with the many successful wetland restoration and enhancement projects that the Duck Stamp Program had funded statewide.
- In 2009, the Duck Stamp fund was "swept" and changes made to the legislation to increase the price of the stamp to \$15.00 with the revenues now going into the General Fund.

**Accomplishments**

- **Over 45 projects have been conducted statewide (mostly on state-owned Wildlife Management Areas) resulting in over 3,145 acres of restored or enhanced wetlands.**
- Two specialized low-ground pressure marsh restoration machines were purchased.
- A 75-acre addition to the Wangunk Meadows Wildlife Management Area in Portland was purchased.
- Restoration of over 300 acres at Great Island WMA in Old Lyme in partnership with US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Ducks Unlimited (DU), and the Connecticut Water Fowlers Association (CWA).
- Restoration of over 150 acres at East River WMA in Guilford.
- Restoration of 80 acres at Quinnipiac Meadows WMA in North Haven.

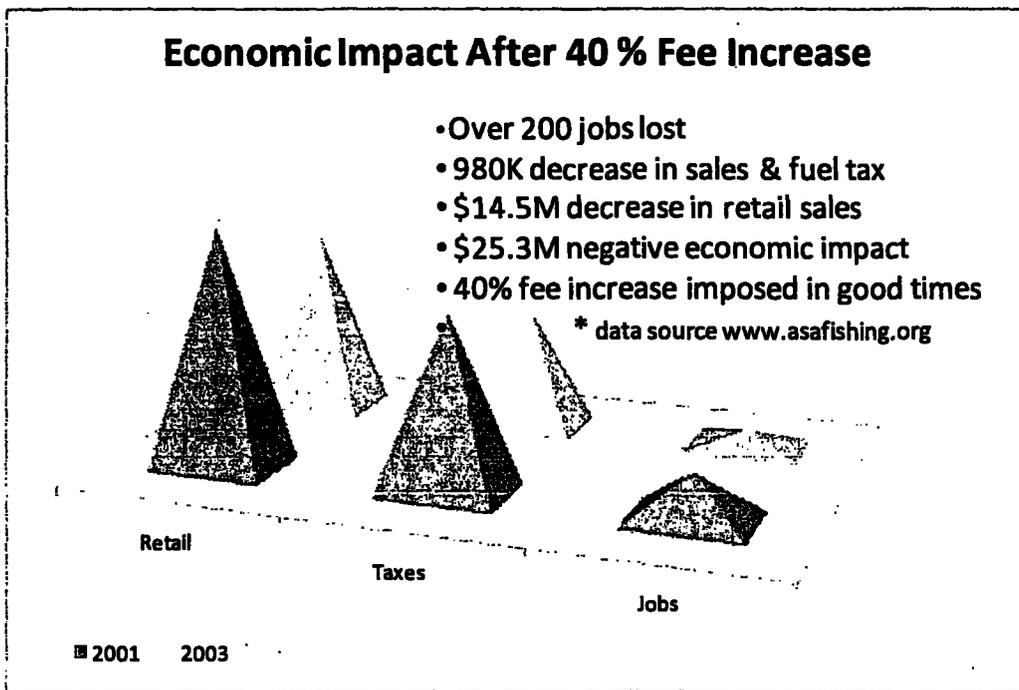
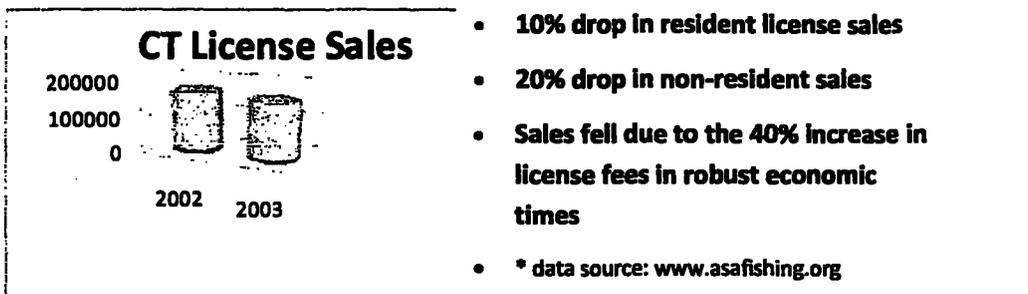
- Other sites enhanced by Duck Stamp Funds, Hale Marsh in Natchaug SF, Wickaboxet Marsh and Sue Hopkins in Pachaug SF, Dodge Marsh in Nehantic SF, Hackney and Cockaponsett #2 in Conckaponsett SF, Roy Swamp, Pine Swamp, Beaver Marsh in Housatonic SF, Higganum Meadows WMA in Haddam, along with many others.

Key Points Regarding the Value of the Duck Stamp Program

- *The DEP's nationally recognized Wetlands Restoration Unit receives no state funds and operates solely off of outside revenue sources, primarily grants and the Duck Stamp fund. Thus, the loss of the Duck Stamp funds will reduce and limit the State's ability to conduct critical wetland restoration work.*
- *The Duck Stamp Program has been able to bankroll wetland projects that were delayed, or required a long time frame to complete. Without the Duck Stamp Program to pay upfront costs, some projects would not have been possible (e.g., Babcock Pond Wildlife Management Area in Colchester).*
- *Duck Stamp funds have been used as required "match" for grant dollars. To date nearly \$900,000. of Duck Stamp funds have been used on projects with a total cost of \$3 million dollars. Thus, Connecticut got over a 3:1 return on Duck Stamp monies.*
- *The wetland restoration work that the Duck Stamp Program has funded has benefited many wildlife species including several designated as Species of Greatest Conservation Need in Connecticut's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy.*
- *Duck Stamp Program projects have provided many positive benefits to the public. For example, several projects have resulted in the removal of hundreds of acres of 10-15 feet tall Phragmites (an invasive non-native plant) thereby enhancing scenic vistas. Also, the improved habitats resulting from projects have benefited various recreational uses of many areas such as hunting, birding and kayaking.*
- *Currently, about 6,000 duck stamps are sold annually. AT \$15.00 APIECE THE MAXIMUM ANNUAL REVENUE GENERATED TO THE GENERAL FUND WOULD BE \$90,000. THIS IS INSIGNIFICANT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE STATE BUDGET. (Revenues will likely be less than \$90,000. as many sportsmen will no longer purchase stamps due to the increased cost and because the funds will no longer be used for their intended purpose – wetland conservation.)*
- *However, DUCK STAMP FUNDS HAVE BEEN VERY SIGNIFICANT TO WETLAND CONSERVATION IN CONNNECTICUT.*
- *Therefore, THE DUCK STAMP ADVISORY BOARD STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT THE NECESSARY STEPS BE TAKEN TO REVERT THE DUCK STAMP PROGRAM BACK TO ITS ORIGINAL INTENT WHEREBY FUNDS ARE USED FOR WETLAND CONSERVATION.*

Prepared by Greg Chasko, Duck Stamp Advisory Board Member, using information provided by the DEP Wildlife Division. 10/09.

**Sportsman Fee Increases Negatively Impact State Revenue**



**Conclusion:**

2010 Promises to be difficult for CT citizens as well as the state budget. A 100% increase in sportsman’s fees will drive many sportsmen away from their sport, and others to neighboring states. While fee revenue may increase in 2010, an understanding of the 2003 data promises a loss of economic output and state revenue that dwarfs the extra fee income.

March 8, 2010 ✓

Dear Chairmen Myer and Roy and members of the Environmental Committee,

I am writing on behalf of sportsmen and dog owners in our state. As a foxhunter, I understand that welfare of our animals is very important, and it's a responsibility I take seriously. We are stewards of their well-being and they serve us loyally. However, nothing in S274 serves either owners or their animals. Please do not allow the fringe element of animal "rightists" influence the governance or infringe the rights of normal, law-abiding citizens in their push for a meatless, petless society. I urge you to vote AGAINST S274.

In the right hands, this bill is overbroad and unclear. In the wrong hands, this bill would be a cudgel to attack otherwise-lawful dog ownership.

This bill is aimed at kennels such as our kennel for foxhounds. As is natural with pack animals, hounds are kept communally in the packs they hunt with to encourage bonding and teamwork. Sometimes eight or more hounds occupy the same kennel run, and they usually get along swimmingly. If I read the statute correctly, it requires an enclosure no smaller than 550 square feet if ten hounds are to be housed together. *This arbitrary requirement is unrelated to the hounds' health and welfare and does not take into account any differences between types, ages, or activity levels of different breeds of dogs.* Suppose a hound has stepped on some debris and injured a pad. That hound would rightly be separated from his pack-mates and given veterinary attention and rest until he recovered. However, per the language of the bill, the person confining that injured hound would be doing so "unreasonably" unless the hound was in a room measuring at least 100 square feet, which would probably be contraindicated by the veterinarian due to the injury. I submit that the proposed square footage requirement defining an "unreasonable confinement" is de facto unreasonable in itself.

Furthermore, the tethering requirements interfere with normal training and exercise programs. There is no connection between spending an hour on a run line and inhumane treatment or neglect. This language reaches into the homes of law-abiding citizens who let their dog out for exercise, then the phone rings, or their kid trips and skins his knee, making that owner subject to a fine. What possible benefit can this bill offer to dogs? *It sounds to me like it is telling dog owners never to let their dogs outside.*

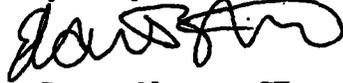
Subsection (4)(B) probably does not apply to most small breeders or foxhound kennels because we typically do not have more than two litters per year and so are not subject to inspection under CGSA §22-342 nor fitting the definition of a "commercial kennel" under CGSA 22-324(C) and so not subject to §22-344. It seems almost by design that this bill targets small breeders like foxhound kennels without overtly saying so. Hunting with hounds and dog breeding are still legal in the state of Connecticut. I hope the committee fully realizes the sweeping scope of this bill in the wrong hands: it will effectively criminalize the currently humane and lawful system of keeping dogs by imposing unreasonable, arbitrary standards on how the dogs may be housed.

In addition to the concerns specific to foxhound kennels and other small breeders, I am also concerned about the potential for abuse of this statute generally. For those of you who have raised children, I ask if at all times your houses were completely free of obstructions that "could reasonably result in injury, strangulation, or entanglement?" While I agree that dog owners should take responsibility for the welfare and health of the animals in their care, this kind of language invites exploitation against the dog owners. *Without ever harming a dog, owners could be subject to fines for the mere possibility of harm.* Realistically, this bill will do more harm to citizens of Connecticut than it could ever prevent from happening to our dogs.

In conclusion, S274 deserves a vote of "NO." It does not address a problem our state is facing and opens the floodgates to criminalize behavior that is not a threat the health and welfare of dogs. Please do not let this bill continue.

Lastly, I would also ask you to vote "YES" on S207, proposed reductions to hunting permit fees. I believe that an increase in volume would more than make up for any potential lost revenue due to reduced fees as far as income for the state, and will make hunting more accessible to more citizens of Connecticut.

Thank you for your time and consideration,



Elana Bertram, Newtown, CT

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**ENVIRONMENT  
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March 8, 2010

Testimony of Eric Hammerling, Executive Director, Connecticut Forest & Park Association

| Raised Bill   | Support/<br>Oppose |
|---|--------------------|
| S.B. 207: AN ACT CONCERNING RECENT INCREASES IN HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSES AND AMENDING CERTAIN MOTOR VEHICLE FINES | Support            |

Co-Chairmen Roy, Meyer, and Members of the Environment Committee:

My name is Eric Hammerling and I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association, the first conservation organization established in Connecticut in 1895. CFPA has offered testimony before the Legislature on issues such as sustainable forestry, state parks and forests, trail recreation, natural resource protection, and land conservation every year since 1897.

Although I am unable to join you at the hearing today, I want to thank the Committee for raising S.B. 207, AN ACT CONCERNING RECENT INCREASES IN HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSES AND AMENDING CERTAIN MOTOR VEHICLE FINES. We share the concerns of the hunters, anglers, and many other recreational users who on October 1, 2009 saw the fees double or increase dramatically for approximately 150 permits, fees, and professional licenses administered by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. Although we understand the need for the state to raise revenues to meet the demands of a challenging fiscal climate, we are disappointed that this was done at the expense of those who are most closely connected to the land and those who may not have the resources to enjoy our state's tremendous outdoor recreational resources.

Although we support this bill and see the value of proposing offsets for fees to be reduced to more reasonable increases, we propose two additional elements that we hope will be considered:

- 1) We wish the scope of the bill was broader to include other fees that were doubled. Specifically, we would like to see State park and forest admissions, parking, and camping fee increases limited to a similar twenty to twenty-five percent increase over the fee levels that were in effect before October 1, 2009; and
- 2) We would like to ensure that the fees collected from citizens for hunting, fishing, and park/forest purposes are targeted toward supporting the wildlife management and park management programs of the CT DEP rather than going to the General Fund.

Thank you for raising this bill and for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of CFPA.