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# ADAM JARCHOW

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 28<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

**Testimony on Assembly Bill 325 – Bear Preference Points  
Assembly Committee on Natural Resources and Sporting Heritage**

Wednesday, May 24, 2017

9:00 a.m. – Room 412 East

To receive a bear tag in Wisconsin, you must apply for and accumulate preference points. A person may apply for a preference point each year until a tag is issued. This can take anywhere from six to ten years, depending on which zone you intend to hunt in.

Under current law, a 10 year old child may possess a bear tag and hunt a bear as long as he is accompanied by a mentor. In order for that 10 year old to have a bear tag, the tag must be transferred to them by someone else. The person who transfers the tag (typically a mother or father) must apply for preference points each year until they are chosen, via lottery system, for a tag.

While a 10 year old can legally hunt a bear, that child cannot begin to send in for a preference point until he or she is 10. This means that he or she may not be able to hunt a bear until they are 16 to 20 years old. In that amount of time, the child may lose interest in bear hunting. Under this bill, a child of any age could apply for a preference point so that by the time they are legally able to hunt, they would be able to get a tag on their own. This practice is already in place in state law for children to apply for bobcat, fisher, otter, and wolf preference points.

This bill ensures that bear hunting in Wisconsin will continue on and the next generation of bear hunters will be ready to hunt when they become of age. Bear hunting is a vital part of Wisconsin's economy and has been a family activity for generations. With the passage of this bill, more children will get excited about bear hunting and keep the tradition alive.

Thank you for allowing me today to speak in favor of Assembly bill #325. I ask that you pass this through your committee. My name is Eric Tuckner. I reside in New Richmond, Wisconsin. I am currently on the board of directors for the Wisconsin Bear Hunters Association. But more importantly I am also a father of two young daughters who are 7 and 1 years old. I began working on this issue back in 2013. It doesn't make sense to me that you can apply at any age for preference points on other game species such as bobcat, fisher, otter, and wolf. Current law makes you wait until you are at least 10 years old in order to purchase preference points on bear and it takes anywhere from 6 to 10 years to draw a harvest bear tag depending on which zone you choose. Which puts those kids at a minimum of 16 to 20 years old to draw their first harvest bear tag. Our goal is to get more youth involved in hunting and if they wait that long you have lost them. Bear hunting is a family oriented sport, often times entire family's participate and it would be nice if these kids could harvest a bear before they are adults. This bill will help us get kids involved at an early age and is one way to keep the tradition of bear hunting in the state of Wisconsin alive. I would be happy to answer any questions you have at this time. Thank you for your time.