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Committee on Natural Resources and Sporting Heritage
Public Hearing, AB 491
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Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee for this opportunity to testify on AB 491, relating to the fee for a first-time annual fishing license for residents who are 16 or 17 years old or who are 65 years old or older.

2011 Wisconsin Act 168 created a first-time license discount of \$5 (\$4.25 plus a \$.75 issuance fee) to recruit new hunters and anglers in Wisconsin. However, the bill unintentionally excluded 16 and 17 year olds and individuals 65 and older from the \$5 fee.

Currently, the mentioned age groups are eligible for a reduced license fee of \$7. This \$2 difference, while seemingly insignificant, was brought to our attention by a resident of the 99th District who you will hear testify today. She was unable to secure the \$5 fee for her daughter. For the sake of uniformity and to further incentivize first-time hunters and anglers in Wisconsin, AB 491 would lower the first-time, eligible license fees for 16 and 17 year olds and those 65 and older to \$5.

It is my hope that the Committee support AB 491 to encourage individuals of all ages, old and young, to enjoy the Wisconsin outdoors and take part in the tradition of outdoor sports in Wisconsin.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Representative Cindi Duchow

First Time Fishing License Fees Legislation

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee for allowing me to testify today.

I am a resident of the village of Merton. My daughter, Jenna, was taking a gym class this past summer and was asked to get a fishing license for the class. Jenna was 16 at the time. I went to the DNR website and attempted to obtain a first time fishing license for Jenna. On the website, we entered Jenna's information and discovered that there was no link for the \$5 first time fishing license. I contacted the DNR customer service by email and was told by the representative that 16 and 17 year old residents already are given a "discounted license fee" of \$7 for the junior license and therefore, did not qualify for the first time license fee of \$5. The representative mentioned that I should contact my legislator if I had any questions. And that is what I did- I contacted Representative Duchow and told her about my experience.

I am wondering if there is a particular reason why our 16 and 17 year old residents have to pay an additional \$2 fee even if they are obtaining a license for the first time. If my daughter were 18, she would be able to qualify for the \$5 fee.

I was willing to pay the additional \$2 to get Jenna the license she needed, but in principal wanted to bring this inequality to your attention. Our teens are the very people that we should be encouraging to apply for licenses. They are the future sports enthusiasts that the DNR will need to maintain revenue and should not be penalized when they apply for a first time license.

I am grateful to Representative Duchow for investigating the matter further and introducing legislation that would address and correct this issue. As a parent and citizen, I wholeheartedly urge you to support this measure (AB491)

Thank you very much for your time and dedication!

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee for allowing me to testify today.

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(My name is Jenna Auton.) I am currently a senior at Arrowhead High School in Hartland. This past summer, I was taking a summer adventure gym class. My teacher required that each student obtain a fishing license – so that we could each participate in the fishing outing at Ottawa State Park. Our teacher told us that the first time fishing license fee would be \$5.

At the time, I was 16 years old. I asked my mom to help me enter the information on the DNR website; however, we were not able to find a link for me to get the first time fishing license.

I ended up having to pay \$7 to get a junior fishing license, rather than being able to receive the \$5 first time license, like my gym teacher originally told me and my classmates.

I had a wonderful time fishing at the state park. I am here today to support the legislation that would allow students like me who are 16 and 17 years old to be able to purchase a first time fishing license at the \$5 fee.

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I feel that it is important to make the fees equal for all first time fishing licenses and not penalize a certain age group.

Thank you very much for your time and for listening to my testimony.