



PATRICK TESTIN

STATE SENATOR

DATE: November 28, 2017
RE: **Testimony on 2017 Assembly Bill 490/Senate Bill 401**
TO: The Senate Committee on Sporting Heritage, Mining and Forestry
FROM: Senator Patrick Testin

Thank you to Chairman Tiffany and the members of the committee for hearing my testimony on Assembly Bill 490/Senate Bill 401, which reduces the fee for resident deer hunting licenses for veterans 70 years or older.

When I attended the Coloma Chicken Chew this summer, I met Mr. Perez, who I am pleased has joined us today, and he proposed this bill idea to me. Mr. Perez said it was included on the 2017 Spring Conservation Congress questionnaire and approved overwhelmingly by a vote of 3314 to 847.

I had my office respond to Mr. Perez and let him know that we would like to do legislation on his idea, and he suggested eliminating the crossbow license upgrade fee as well. After speaking to the Department of Natural Resources and asking them to “ballpark” the numbers, the fiscal estimate was reasonable. I then spoke to Rep. Skowronski and asked if he would be willing to author this legislation with me.

This bill seems like a small, but meaningful way for the State of Wisconsin to show appreciation to all the veterans who sacrificed for us and still enjoy participating in hunting. As you can see from the Department’s fiscal estimate, they anticipate they could absorb the cost of this legislation. This is a very small cost to display gratefulness to those to whom we owe so much. I hope you will join me in supporting Senate Bill 401/Assembly Bill 490.

Thank you for your consideration.



KEN SKOWRONSKI

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 82nd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

(608) 266-8590
Toll-Free: (888) 534-0082
Rep.Skowronski@legis.wi.gov

P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708-8953

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Mr, Chairman and members of the Senate Committee on Sporting Heritage, Mining and Forestry,

Thank you for taking the time this morning to consider Senate Bill 490 regarding hunting fees for veterans who are 70 years of age or older. This legislation would be a tremendous show of appreciation to the men and women who served our country and still participate in deer hunting. This legislation would lower the resident deer hunting license from \$21.25 to \$14.25 for veterans who are 70 years of age and older. The bill also eliminates the \$2.25 charge to use a crossbow if a veteran over the age of 70 has a bow hunting license.

We've made significant strides to encourage participation in outdoor recreational sports like hunting and fishing. This bill will help ensure that our veterans have opportunities to participate in those activities even if they are on a limited budget. This gesture could have a significant positive impact on our population of aging veteran hunters. Optimistically, this could increase participation in all levels of hunting as veterans and their family members participate together in these activities.

The Conversation Congress overwhelmingly supported this proposal in their 2017 spring questionnaire as it was approved in all 72 counties by a vote of 3,314 to 847. The bill was supported unanimously by the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources and Sporting Heritage last month and passed on a voice vote by the Assembly as a whole in early this month. This bill is just small display of gratitude for those who have done so much in protection of our freedom.

Thank you for your consideration.