



# JIM OTT

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 23<sup>rd</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

(608) 266-0486  
District: (262) 240-0808  
Toll-Free: (888) 534-0023  
Rep.Ottj@legis.wi.gov

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

Good Afternoon Mr. Chairman and Committee Members. Thank you for hearing my testimony on AB 173.

Specialty license plates have become very popular in Wisconsin over the last few years, and we continue to see requests for them on a regular basis. This request concerns an activity that is one of the most popular in Wisconsin: fishing. Specifically, this bill is requesting a specialty plate for Wisconsin Trout Unlimited.

Trout Unlimited is a national organization with over 400 chapters in 36 states, with 22 chapters in Wisconsin alone. Our state has over 5,000 TU members. This week the National TU organization is holding its annual convention in Middleton. The five day event will pump thousands of dollars into our local economy.

While members greatly enjoy the sport of fishing, TU is much more than just a fishing organization. Every year members spend thousands of hours on stream restoration and habitat improvement projects. Members also actively participate in youth fishing activities, and became involved in the "Project Healing Waters" initiative, in which TU members interact with disabled veterans, providing fly tying, rod building and casting instructions, and taking vets out on fishing excursions.

In short, Wisconsin TU is an organization of members committed to fishing, conservation and Wisconsin. I have no doubt TU members will show the same commitment in meeting any specialty plate requirements.

Our state has nearly 3,000 trout streams stretching more than 13,000 miles. Thousands of fishing licenses are sold each year, and fishing brings many tourists to our state. A specialty plate featuring TU would acknowledge the ongoing efforts that TU members make to improve our natural stream environment and enhance fishing opportunities. The plate would also highlight the value and significance that fishing plays in the economy and heritage of Wisconsin.

Thank You.