



NORTH DAKOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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COMMITTEES:
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Good evening Chairman Porter and Committee,

My name is Matt Ruby, from District 40 up in Minot. HB 1120 is before you for consideration and I ask for your support. What this does is provide a deer tag for ND veterans with a 100% disability rating for the VA. If the amendment is adopted, it would also designate the 5 days prior to Youth Deer Season.

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs there are currently 1213 ND Veterans with a 100% rating. When you factor in the percentage of those 1213 are physically able to hunt now and that put in for tags, we are most likely looking at a much smaller number of potential tags. Also to consider is the amount of tags currently allocated for different hunting groups. There are two groups that get tags and help veterans hunt, and there is the Camp Grafton opportunity. This would cover those that don't get a tag in though instances.

The decision to change the season to prior to youth season was made because the point of having a youth season was to give them and their parents an opportunity to hunt and learn about ethical hunting and good practices with having to compete for hunting spots. Although a later date was also considered, we felt the earlier season, while not optimal for getting deer to move would provide the best weather and land conditions for a disabled hunter. I think this is the most important part of the bill. Giving Vets the opportunity to hunt early without the competition of the regular season helps alleviate some of the numbers during that season when you subtract the number of tags that would be filled during this early 5 days.

There is no question that disabled veterans deserve our thanks and gratitude. I fully understand that there are other benefits for veterans not just dealing with hunting. ND veterans have given up large parts of their lives to serve or state and country, and I believe this is a small gesture from the state to show appreciation. Thank you for your attention. I stand for questions.

Rep. Matt Ruby