



House Energy and Natural Resources Committee
Testimony on SB 2344

North Dakota Game and Fish Department
Greg Link

March 25, 2021

Chairman Porter and members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee, my name is Greg Link. I serve as the Conservation and Communications Division Chief for the North Dakota Game and Fish Department (Department). I am testifying today in SUPPORT of SB 2344.

The sustained use of shooting ranges and availability of firearms and ammunition are extremely important to the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, our mission, and the public we serve. Therefore, we support the safeguards provided by SB 2344 to ensure these activities are not unduly impeded.

However, the Department operates and manages several public shooting ranges on properties we own or manage through lease from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. For safety, risk management, routine upkeep, and for conducting special training events, we do need to impose certain restrictions and limitations on their use, and at times periodically close the ranges for such purposes. Therefore, we appreciate the bill's sponsors building in the provision provided in Section 1.a.(1) of the bill.

The ranges we manage provide opportunity for both new and experienced hunters and recreational shooters to become more proficient with their firearms, as well as, properly sight-in their firearms. The ranges are important for recruiting new hunters and sport shooters, in addition to retaining the ones we already have. They are used heavily by members of the public.

ND Administrative Rules 30-04-02-05 provide the Department the authority to "regulate" the lawful use of our shooting ranges. As a result, we temporarily close the ranges for maintenance, repairs, mowing, and clean-up. For obvious safety reasons, we close all ranges we manage at sunset. We have also closed some of the ranges for designated law enforcement and military training events, and for special Hunter Education "hands-on" shooting seminars.

For the rationale provided, please accept the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's SUPPORT of the passage of SB 2344.