

Speaker Joe Tate  
Majority Leader Winnie Brinks  
House Republican Leader Matt Hall  
Senate Republican Leader Aric Nesbitt  
House Appropriations Committee Chair Rep. Angela Witwer  
Senate Appropriations Committee Chair Sen. Sarah Anthony

Dear Michigan Legislative Leaders,

Hunting, fishing, and trapping represent an \$11.2 billion economic impact for the state of Michigan, from a 2019 Michigan United Conservation Clubs economic impact study. There are more than 700,000 hunting or trapping license holders, over 1,000,000 licensed anglers, and approximately 3,000,000 individuals who watch wildlife.

In 2013, the Michigan Legislature adopted the first hunting, fishing, and trapping license package since 1996. While impactful, the package failed to address the funding issues of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on a longer-term basis.

Soon, a bipartisan slate of your colleagues will be bringing forward a license fee adjustment for your consideration. The package includes some significant changes, but importantly includes a consumer price index adjustment built in to ensure revenue gained keeps up with the rising costs of natural resources management, equipment and materials.

To put a fine point on it, DNR Wildlife Division's maintenance costs have more than doubled from \$1.4 million to \$3.1 million since the last license fee modification went into effect in 2014. Fisheries Division's costs of fish food for our hatcheries program now cost a million dollars, an increase of 71 percent over the last several years.

The Michigan Legislature has the opportunity to provide a longer-term solution to the funding issues of the DNR.

Hunters, anglers and trappers are proud to currently contribute tens of millions of dollars in license revenue each year for funding fish and wildlife conservation in Michigan, representing the vast majority of the Game and Fish Protection Fund, but there is a need to expand this pool.

Until this happens, license fees remain the single largest source of revenue supporting fish and wildlife management, habitat management and DNR law enforcement.

We, the undersigned organizations, recognize the need for a license fee restructuring and support the need for the proposal. We are looking forward to working with the Michigan Legislature this winter to ensure that fish and wildlife conservation and management is

adequately funded for years to come. Both Michigan's natural resources and our outdoor heritage depend on it.

Sincerely,