



QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Date: 4 July 2019
To: Governor J.B. Pritzker
From: Jacob Pries, Policy Intern
Re: Support for HB 3623

On behalf of the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA), we would like to state our support for Illinois HB 3623 and respectfully request that you sign this vital piece of legislation into law. The QDMA is a national nonprofit wildlife conservation organization dedicated to ensuring the future of white-tailed deer, wildlife habitat and our hunting heritage. Founded in 1988, the QDMA has over 60,000 members nationwide and our membership includes hunters, landowners and natural resource professionals.

Hunters are the cornerstone of conservation in the state of Illinois and across the country. They contribute significant funds to conservation through license sales and excise taxes on hunting gear. Hunters in the state of Illinois directly contribute to a \$25.8 billion outdoor economy that supports 200,000 jobs within the state. Unfortunately, hunter numbers have dwindled and with this, so has the funding for conservation that so many individuals rely upon within your state. The tradition of hunting in Illinois runs deep and without the passing of measures such as HB 3623, this deeply rooted tradition, along with our wild spaces are placed in jeopardy.

However, with the passing of HB 3623, this crucial step in making the difference for hunter recruitment, retention, and reactivation will begin to restore the tradition of hunting and the wild spaces we are fortunate enough to enjoy. Through the expanded apprentice opportunities under HB 3623, this allows new hunters the opportunity to gain necessary experience from more seasoned hunters before going afield on their own. This valuable experience gained by the new hunters allows them to become more comfortable afield and develop safe, ethical hunting practices. Additionally, the added youth deer hunting license amendment will allow for Illinois' youth to have an increased opportunity statewide to experience the indescribable joys of seeing their first deer appear through the trees, the satisfaction of accomplishing tasks beyond what they believe they can, the ethical obligations of fair chase and discovering the inherent value of conservation. Once again, we would like to respectfully request that you sign Illinois HB 3623 into law for the benefit of all Illinoisans. On behalf of QDMA, we thank you for your time, dedicated service to the state of Illinois and your consideration of this matter.

Respectfully,

Jacob D. Pries
Policy Intern (QDMA)