



2/6/2024

Esteemed Committee Members,

My name is Ron Greco and I run Moose Maine Kids. MMK is a 501c3 non-profit with a sole goal of increasing youth participation rates in traditional outdoor activities like hunting and fishing and providing kids with Critical Illnesses and Disabilities outdoor Dream Adventures. We support LD77 with preference for the amended language of the bill.

The fish hatchery program is a proven asset to the state's tourism industry and is crucial for furthering our fishing heritage. The stocking programs contribute significant opportunities for people who fish across spectrums of age and experience. The program addresses a huge gap in opportunities for kids, those with limited abilities and those with mobility issues. A decrease in this program will have a long-term negative impact on tourism and the sporting industry in the State.

The need for additional funding is driven by the direct correlation between costs and service level. To grow healthy fish, they need to eat. And like nearly everything else in the United States over the past ten years, these costs have risen significantly. I commend the department for being able to keep this program afloat for as long as they have given these constraints. I feel it is very important for us to note this success and give them the credit they deserve for performing above any normal set of expectations.

Thank you for your time!

Ron Greco

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