



## MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

### Office of the Commissioner

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April 10, 2025

Senator Hawj,

I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding reduced cost hunting and fishing licenses for Disabled Veterans.

The proposal included in the Governor's recommendations offers discounted hunting and angling license to eligible Veterans with 50% or higher service-connected disabilities at a greatly reduced cost of \$5. This change in fee structure will still provide funding to cover the state's electronic licensing system processing costs and allow the DNR to collect excise taxes for federal reimbursement.

Across the United States, efforts to increase the use of public lands and outdoor recreation as a treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other related conditions in Veterans have gained traction. There are several non-profits coordinating these efforts for disabled Veterans. The United States Congress has also tasked the United States Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Health Administration (VHA), through the Veterans Comprehensive Prevention, Access to Care, and Treatment (COMPACT) Act of 2020, with establishing a Task Force (Task Force) on Outdoor Recreation for Veterans.

One of the main areas that the Task Force is focusing on is identifying barriers that make it challenging for Veterans to connect with outdoor recreation opportunities that augment their health and wellness. In many instances, the cost of a license can be a barrier for hunting and fishing activities.

This proposal would reduce the cost of license for service-connected disabled veterans, reduce barriers and create more hunting and angling opportunities for more service-connected disabled veterans.

This is a top priority -- and has been for several years -- for the Minnesota Commanders' Task Force which is made up of leadership from the state's largest Congressionally Chartered Veteran Service Organizations including the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans and VFW. This proposal will have a positive impact on thousands of Veterans in our state. I look forward to continuing to work with you to honor Minnesota's Veterans.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bradley S. Lindsay".

Bradley S. Lindsay  
Commissioner

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