Modernizing the Pittman-Robertson Fund for Tomorrow’s Needs Act (H.R. 877)

Committee of Jurisdiction: House Natural Resources Committee
Lead Sponsor: Congressional Sportsmen’s Caucus Co-Chair
Congressman Austin Scott (GA)
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BACKGROUND
The Pittman-Robertson Act (P-R) directs excise taxes on firearms, ammunition and archery equipment to state wildlife agencies for wildlife management, species and habitat conservation, scientific research, population monitoring, hunter education and hunting access. Through these excise taxes and associated purchases of hunting licenses, archery enthusiasts, hunters, and recreational shooters are the nation’s primary funders of wildlife conservation. Unfortunately, this “user-pays, public-benefits” system of conservation funding that benefits all citizens is in jeopardy.

In 1978, 16.2 million of the nation’s 222 million citizens purchased a hunting license, representing 7% of the U.S. population. Now, there are over 328 million people in the United States, 13.3 million of which are certified hunting license holders, or less than 4% of the nation’s population. This steady decline in participation over the past four decades threatens not only America’s sporting heritage, but also represents a fundamental challenge to maintaining funding streams that are vital to state-based wildlife conservation.

To confront this challenge, state wildlife agencies need added flexibility to use P-R funds to develop and implement strategies to recruit, retain, and reactivate (R3) the nation’s next generation of hunters and target shooters. Doing so will ensure that America’s sportsmen and women continue to serve as a crucial source of funding for wildlife conservation that benefits citizens in every state.

LEGISLATIVE GOALS AND EFFECTS

- Provides increased flexibility for state wildlife agencies.
- Establishes grants to support a national hunting and shooting sports recruitment program funded by an additional $5 million in archery-related excise taxes.
- Places a cap on the amount of funds that can be spent on hunter and recreational shooting recruitment efforts to ensure conservation remains the primary focus of P-R.
- Ensures the long-term viability of revenue sources that fund state-based conservation across the country.
- Supports the recruitment, reactivation, and retainment of future generations of hunters, archery enthusiasts, and recreational shooters therefore providing state wildlife agencies with increased funds for wildlife conservation efforts.

Did you know, female participation in hunting increased by 104% between 2001 and 2016, while female participation in target shooting increased by more than 81% during that same time as a result of increased R3 efforts.

LEARN MORE:
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