



To: Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee

Re: Legislative Bill 1413 – Transfer and provide for the transfer of funds and create and change the use and distribution of funds

Position: Oppose Sections 30 & 31

Date: January 30, 2024

Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee,

On behalf of the Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation (CSF), I respectfully ask that you oppose sections 30 & 31 of Legislative Bill 1413 (LB 1413). These sections would not only redirect critical conservation funding away from the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC), but, specifically as it relates to the transfer of funds from the State Game Fund, would be a diversion of sportsmen-generated funding that would make the state of Nebraska ineligible to receive their federal apportionments through the Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration Program.

Founded in 1989, CSF is the informed authority across outdoor issues and serves as the primary conduit for influencing public policy. Working with the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus (CSC), the Governors Sportsmen's Caucus (GSC), and the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses (NASC), CSF gives a voice to hunters, anglers, recreational shooters, and trappers on Capitol Hill and throughout state capitols advocating on vital outdoor issues that are the backbone of our nation's conservation legacy.

Since the passage of the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration (Pittman-Robertson) Act in 1937, sportsmen and women, rather than the tax-paying public, have been primarily responsible for funding fish and wildlife conservation in the United States. Nebraska is no exception to this model, which relies on the sale of hunting and fishing licenses and federal apportionments of revenue generated through the excises taxes on sporting goods authorized through the Pittman-Robertson Act and the Dingell-Johnson Act with Wallop-Breaux Amendments. This framework is referred to as the “American System of Conservation Funding” (ASCF¹). To be eligible for these federal moneys, which totaled more than \$27.4 million for NGPC in 2023 alone,² state fish and wildlife agencies must ensure that all revenue received through the ASCF is used only for the administration of the fish and wildlife agency. By transferring any of the sportsmen-generated money from the State Game Fund, the Legislature would not only be stripping NGPC of much-needed funding but would be making the state ineligible to receive their federal apportionments,

¹ "American System of Conservation Funding." Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation. Accessed: January 29, 2024. <https://congressionalsportsmen.org/policy/american-system-of-conservation-funding/>.

² “Funding Sources.” Partner with a Payer. Accessed: January 29, 2024. <https://partnerwithapayer.org/funding-sources/>.

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ultimately costing the state much more than the \$7,000,000 that Section 30 of LB 1413 proposes to transfer to the General Fund.

Considering the impact that these and other proposed transfers recommended in LB 1413 could have on sportsmen and women, and the rural economies that rely on sportsmen-related tourism, we respectfully encourage members of the Committee to remove these sections from this legislation. As outlined above, sportsmen-generated conservation dollars must only be used to support NGPC and their conservation efforts. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this issue. Should you require additional information on this, or other sportsmen-related topics, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Jake Gould
Coordinator, Great Plains States
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
jgould@congressionalsportsmen.org | 202-594-7973

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