

Dear NSIA Members,

Our industry and recreational fishers are under attack in Olympia with the introduction of HB 2241, which will be heard in the committee on Environment chaired by Rep. Dave Upthegrove (D) (Dist 33) and a past supporter of our industry. The bill is a well intended, but misguided effort by environmental and bird watching groups to ban the use of lead under 1 inch in length and 1oz in weight **in all state waters**. Passage of this legislation would have very real economic consequences to our industry and recreational fishers. According to the latest science the only risk to birds is if the lead is ingested.

The WDFW Commission appropriately ruled on this issue two years ago by passing lead size restrictions on a small number of lakes that were certified to be home to breeding pairs of loons and any further attempts to expand their policy should be made by this independent citizen commission.

A number of groups have petitioned the federal EPA repeatedly during the last five years to ban the use of lead nationally and have been rejected each time. The EPA has repeatedly ruled that if lead is not ingested there is no evidence of harm to the environment, public or our natural resources. The agency determined that no action was warranted and expressed concern over the enormous economic consequences. The same petitioners filed another petition in 2011 that is currently under review by EPA and a decision is expected by late February of 2012 which we believe this latest petition will also be rejected. An interesting note is that the commercial fishing industry and Native American tribes are excluded from this legislation.

This ban would apply only to the recreational industry and fishing citizens of Washington State. According to Gordon Robertson of the American Sportsfishing Industry, nets in Lake Superior have killed thousands of loons in the last year. Compare that to Washington State where a total of less than ten loons have been verified to have died in our state in the last decade from lead poisoning. Recreational fishing is our cultural heritage and we have been fishing lead in lakes, streams and ocean waters for over a century. We must not let small special interest groups overreact and control how we conduct our fisheries. Below are listed the members of the committee on Environment and their contact information. I would ask that everyone take the time to contact the members of this committee and ask them to reject this proposed legislation for the following reasons.

1. It is not scientifically defensible. Lead is not harmful to the environment or wildlife if not ingested. Cite Environmental Protection Agency ruling on petitions.
2. Economics. This could cost the industry and state hundreds of jobs and million of dollars to address a problem that does not exist.
3. The legislation is punitive to one industry and misdirected. Tribal and Non Tribal nets kill thousands of birds and aquatic animals each year and yet they are excluded.
4. The state should be doing everything possible to create jobs rather creating legislation that will result increased unemployment and lower state revenues.
5. This type of policy setting should be determined by the WDFW Commission or

federal mandate.

Please write to the Committee listed below. Be respectful in your emails and calls and ask for their support in killing this proposed legislation. If you reside in any of these legislators districts, be sure to mention that and communicate to them what organization you belong to and the membership. Also, we need to have our business members and sports fishing organizations present in real numbers to testify or sign in opposition to the legislation. Please contact me if you have questions regarding testimony or need driving or parking instructions.

Rep Dave Upthegrove (Chairman) Dist.33 (D) dave.upthegrove@leg.wa.gov 360 786-7868

Rep. Jeff Morris (Dist. 40) (D) jeff.morris@leg.wa.gov 360 786-7970

Rep. Shelly Short (Dist. 7) (R) shelly.short@leg.wa.gov 360 786-7908

Rep. Kirk Pearson (Dist.39) (R) kirk.pearson@leg.wa.gov 360 786-7816

Rep. Steve Tharinger (Dist. 24) (D) steve.tharinger@leg.wa.gov 360 786-7904

Rep. Luis Moscoso (Dist. 1) (D) luis.moscoso@leg.wa.gov 360 786-7900

Rep. Paul Harris (Dist. 17) (R) paul.harris@leg.wa.gov 360 786-7976

Rep. Joe Fitzgibbon (Dist. 34) (D) joe.fitzgibbon@leg.wa.gov 360 786-7052

Rep. Dean Takko (Dist. 19) (D) dean.takko@leg.wa.gov 360 786-7806

Rep. Larry Crouse (Dist.4) (R) larry.crouse@leg.wa 360 786-7820

Rep. Drew Hansen (Dist. 23) (D) drew.hansen@leg.wa.gov 360 786 7842

Rep. Sharon Wylie (Dist. 49) (D) sharon.wylie@leg.wa.gov 360 786-7924

Rep. Terry Nealey (Dist. 16) (R) terry.nealey@leg.wa.gov 360 786-7828

Rep. Laurie Jenkins (Dist. 27) (D) laurie.jenkins@leg.wa.gov 360 786-7930

Rep. David Taylor (Dist. 15) (R) david.taylor@leg.wa.gov 360 786-7874