

HOUSE BILL 2263

By Darby

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 70,
relative to wildlife.

WHEREAS, hunting, angling, and trapping are central to Tennessee's rural heritage; and

WHEREAS, hunters and anglers are responsible for some of the greatest successes in North American conservation, including the resurgence of waterfowl, elk, deer, duck, and turkey populations; and

WHEREAS, hunters and anglers provide the majority of funding for conservation in the United States through purchasing licenses, permits, and tags in their pursuit of fish and wildlife; and

WHEREAS, this heritage of conservation through hunting, angling, and trapping is under threat in other states by anti-hunting organizations looking to ban hunting and angling; and

WHEREAS, these efforts to ban hunting are not based on principles of wildlife biology or science; and

WHEREAS, hunting, angling, and trapping are vital to conservation in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the General Assembly that hunting, angling, and trapping be recognized in the State of Tennessee as the preferred method of wildlife management and conservation; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 70-1-201(a), is amended by adding the following between the first and second sentence:

The appointees must also actively participate in the activities regulated by the commission, including hunting, angling, trapping, and boating.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 70-1-206(a)(4), is amended by deleting the subdivision and substituting:

(4) Establish objectives within the state policy that will enable the wildlife resources agency to develop, manage, and maintain sound programs of hunting, angling, trapping, and other wildlife-related outdoor recreational activities that have the primary purpose of utilizing such activities as the preferred method of wildlife management and conservation of game species within this state;

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 70-1-301, is amended by adding the new, appropriately designated subsection:

() It is the policy of the state that the agency shall support and promote hunting, angling, and trapping, including the management of predators through hunting and trapping, as preferred methods of wildlife management and conservation.

SECTION 4. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 70-4-107, is amended by adding the new, appropriately designated subsection:

() The commission has exclusive authority over the taking of game and fish, except to the extent such authority involves the regulation of the alteration of aquatic resources under title 69, part 3. In issuing a proclamation under this part, the commission shall:

(1) Consider the recommendations of professional fish and wildlife biologists; and

(2) Recognize the lawful taking of game, including, but not limited to, hunting, angling, and trapping, as the preferred method of wildlife management and conservation within this state.

SECTION 5. This act takes effect July 1, 2024, the public welfare requiring it.