

To: Senate Natural Resources Committee

February 5, 2012

From: Paul White
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Subject: Written Testimony regarding SB314

My name is Paul White. My wife, Carolyn, and I live at the Marion County Park and Lake, near Marion, KS. I would like to say that we oppose eliminating the exemption for persons 65 and older. I know more revenue is needed and that some states have already done this. I propose that, instead of eliminating it altogether, the exemption age be raised to 70.

I feel sure that the age group of 65 to 70 makes up the major portion of the exempted population and would thus generate significant additional revenue. It is also the largest growing group of seniors. I think the group over 70 is the group that benefits more financially from the exemption and that, as the smaller group, it would generate much less additional revenue.

Those approaching retirement today are already seeing many changes and this would just be another one on their list to plan for. For those over 70, it would avoid another negative impact on their fixed incomes that they were unable to plan for. The impact is double for a married couple as it could impact them up to \$77.00 per year as a family unit, not just the value of a single license fee of \$20.50 or \$38.50 for a combination license.

I know this fee is a small one in our buckets, but our buckets are getting close to the point that one more drop will make them overflow. We are already seeing a lot of "small" increases such as sales tax, gasoline, utilities, food, and many other items that are filling up our buckets. Many would just quit fishing if they had to pay a fee. This is especially true of the women who just fish occasionally.

An alternative is the exemption age could be raised to 75 but offer a "dual" license to a couple when one of them reaches age 70. One license to cover both of them. In discussing this with my wife, she said she might quit fishing if she had to buy a license since she doesn't fish as much as I do.

Eliminating the exemption altogether would be detrimental to the state's fishing and hunting program. The vendors that sell sporting goods will also suffer from lower sales which would result in lower tax revenue for the state. We need to do everything we can to encourage fishing and hunting by Kansas residents.

I thank you for considering my proposal. I know you will do what you can to make sure there is an equitable trade off.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul White". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned at the bottom left of the page.