



SENATOR JANET BEWLEY

WISCONSIN STATE SENATE

Senate Committee on Agriculture, Small Business, And Tourism Public Hearing on Assembly Bill 291 January 6, 2016

Chairman Moulton and members, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Assembly Bill 291. This bill will provide an option for all Wisconsin hunters to meet safety requirements with another color that research indicates may be even more visible to other hunters and at the same time less visible to deer than blaze orange.

I'm very happy to see this committee taking up this legislation, which builds on highly-respected faculty research at our state university. I was thrilled to have the chance to visit Dr. Sarmadi in his lab this summer to discuss the proposal and was impressed by his display of the potential advantages of blaze pink as an option.

Dr. Sarmadi demonstrated that blaze or fluorescent pink can in many cases be seen more easily by other hunters than our traditional blaze or fluorescent orange, especially when the fall colors include orange. At the same time, pink is less visible to deer.

I'm also happy to see this bill come up at a time our focus can be on the science and on the option this would create. As we know, a lot of the initial press attention to AB 291 focused on pink as a way to attract and keep more women involved in hunting. While increasing interest in hunting is a laudable goal, it is not the reason behind the bill.

I signed on to this bill because I'm convinced this is a viable option for all hunters in my part of the state and across Wisconsin. I support blaze or fluorescent pink as an option for any hunter seeking the advantage to be seen better by other hunters and less well by deer.

Much as Wisconsin hunters have moved over time from traditionally wearing red to the far more visible and safer blaze orange, this new option will build on advanced knowledge of visibility to both humans and deer. Thank you again for your consideration of this bill and I urge the committee to give both Wisconsin sportsmen & women this option.



25th Senate District

State Capitol: P.O. Box 7882, Madison, WI 53707-7882 ★ E-mail: sen.bewley@legis.wi.gov

Web: <http://bewley.senate.wi.gov> ★ (608) 266-3510 ★ Toll-free: (800) 469-6562











STATE REPRESENTATIVE

KATHY BERNIER

January 6, 2016

To: Senate Committee on Agriculture, Small Business and Tourism

From: Rep. Kathy Bernier

Re: Assembly Bill 291 - The color of clothing required to be worn during the season for hunting deer with firearms.

Dear Chairman Moulton and Committee members,

Thank you for scheduling Assembly Bill 291 for public hearing and for allowing me time to present submit written testimony in favor of the bill.

Deer hunting in Wisconsin is more than just an outdoor activity, it's a family tradition. This tradition, however, has too often left us women out in the cold, so to speak. This proposal will make Wisconsin the first state in the nation to permit the wearing of blaze pink, in addition to the traditional blaze orange, hunting gear when participating in this annual rite of passage.

This bill is not about fashion, although blaze pink is an attractive color; it's a color with high visibility and one which will offer safety to thousands of Wisconsin hunters each year.

Blaze pink is more likely to be worn by women than by men. This might be more significant than it appears on the surface. It's not primarily the color pink that appeals to women, but the fit that will undoubtedly accompany the new clothing line. While some manufactures may produce blaze orange gear designed for women, it oftentimes retails at a much higher price and is difficult to find. Too many women end up wearing men's clothing to save a few dollars. As a frugal person and an avid hunter myself, I can tell you that neither option is appealing. By authorizing the use of blaze pink hunting gear, manufactures can design clothing specifically for women. This should bring the cost down and will create options for those, like myself, who prefer the comfort of appropriately fitted gear while staking out our spot in the woods.

I've spent my fair share of time in a tree stand with other women hunters, and I can tell you that blaze pink, designed and sized for women, would be a welcome addition and, more importantly, it sends the message that women are valued members of this proud Wisconsin tradition.

Again, thank you Mr. Chairman and committee members for your interest in Assembly Bill 291 and for holding this hearing. I urge you to support this proposal and look forward to wearing well-fitted pink gear in next year's hunt.

(608) 266-9172
Toll-Free: (888) 534-0068
Fax: (608) 282-3668
Home: (715) 720-0326

P.O. Box 8952 • Madison, WI 53708-8952
Rep.Bernier@legis.wi.gov



TERRY MOULTON



WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

23RD SENATE DISTRICT

From: Senator Terry Moulton

To: Senate Committee on Agriculture, Small Business and Tourism

Re: Testimony on Assembly Bill 291
Relating to: the color of clothing required to be worn during the season for hunting deer with firearms.

Date: January 6th, 2016

As an avid outdoorsman and a co-chair of the Legislative Sportsmens Caucus, I am proud of Wisconsin's sporting heritage and the world-class hunting and fishing that people from all over come here to enjoy. In recent years, however, there has been a decline in the number of Wisconsin hunters, from nearly 700,000 deer hunters in 2000, to just about 608,000 last year – a loss of roughly 90,000 hunters. This decline is a serious issue because we depend on hunters to control the white tail deer population along with other animals who threaten agriculture, transportation and other Wisconsin industries. In addition, our state benefits greatly from the sale of hunting licenses and the \$2.5 billion in hunting-related tourism and sales generated each year in our state.

In response to this decline, the Legislature passed a series of bills, including the Sporting Heritage Bill, to increase the number of hunters in Wisconsin. These bills have expanded public hunting areas and increased recruitment and retention programs in addition to other provisions to preserve and pass on our sporting heritage. We have specifically targeted recruiting and retaining new hunters with \$5 first time license fees and incentives for current hunters to recruit and mentor new ones.

Our efforts are working; in 2014, there were over 21,000 first-time hunters in Wisconsin and among these new hunters, women outnumber men three to one. The Department of Natural Resources expects this number to grow, projecting a 43% increase in women hunters by 2030. Private industry has taken note of this growing demographic as well. According to the National Shooting Sports Foundation, in 2013, 20% of all hunting and shooting related sales were attributed to women, an unprecedented 15% increase since 2010. Because of this huge demographic shift, firearms manufacturers and manufacturers of outdoor goods are producing more and more hunting devices and accessories designed to appeal to women stylistically as well as accommodate shorter, smaller builds. Assembly Bill 291 is aimed at building on Wisconsin's recruitment successes and capitalizing on the growing popularity of pink hunting gear by allowing hunters to wear blaze pink in the field while deer hunting.

Blaze orange was first mandated in 1980 for certain types of hunting, not because of any scientific study, simply because it was a bright color that could easily be seen by most people. In

Serving the 23rd Senate District

considering this bill to authorize the use of blaze pink gear while deer hunting, legislators consulted with Dr. Majid Sarmadi, a professor and researcher at the University of Wisconsin and one of the nation's leading color experts. Dr. Sarmadi completed an analysis of a variety of blaze pink and blaze orange hunting products and determined that commercially available blaze pink clothing is equally or more visible to the average human eye than blaze orange. Dr. Sarmadi concluded that, in addition to being easier for humans to see, blaze pink is harder for deer to spot than blaze orange.

AB 291 is simple bill that builds on our hunting recruitment and retention efforts and gives all hunters more choices without reducing safety in the field. Blaze pink clothing is as safe, if not safer, than blaze orange and may even provide hunters with an edge when looking to bag their next buck. Thank you for allowing me to testify today. Please join my colleagues in the Legislative Sportsmens Caucus and vote in favor of AB 291.