

Institute for Legislative Action

11250 WAPLES MILL ROAD

FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA 22030



NRA

March 17, 2022

The Honorable Kerry Donovan
200 E. Colfax, Room 346
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Chairman Donovan:

The NRA is most known for our advocacy and protection of the Second Amendment and the Right to Bear Arms, but it also has a history rich in hunting. Since 1871, a major objective of the National Rifle Association has been to provide education and training in the safe and proper use of firearms. The NRA has certified over 125,000 instructors and over one million people are trained by NRA-certified trainers every year. Marksmanship, safe firearm handling and storage, range etiquette, and a myriad of firearm-related courses are all offered by the NRA and its instructors. These are important skills to have not just for shooting, but also for hunting.

In 1949 the NRA created the first hunter education course and developed hunter safety training as it is known today. Since then, our proven hunting education principles have been adopted by one state after another. In 2014, because of the NRA's concern about the future of hunting and hunters in addition to our mission to promote hunting, the NRA created a free, millennial-friendly, online hunter education course that anyone in America can take. States can offer this course at no-charge yet it counts as a donation under the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937 (Pittman Robertson Act) and therefore can be used as "match" dollars. To date, the NRA's online hunter education has trained over 98,000 individuals (valued at \$2.5 million). This is purely a donation by NRA members who care about the future of hunting and conservation.

To this end, the NRA strongly supports HB 22-1168 which would allow 7th graders to voluntarily take hunter education in their public schools. Hunter education is one of the largest barriers towards hunting in America. Offering this class will help to ensure we have future hunters and a future source of funding for wildlife conservation.

As you are aware, hunters contribute millions of dollars every year towards wildlife management and conservation projects through the excise taxes they pay on firearms and ammunition, and the sale of licenses and other state fees required to hunt. That said, I would be remiss to not mention the incredible contribution all shooters and firearm owners make to wildlife conservation in America due to the Pittman Robertson Act. Arguably most purchasers of firearms and ammunition are not hunters, yet the excise tax they pay goes towards wildlife conservation in America. So not only should we be grateful to hunters who pay these taxes—we, also, need to be grateful to American shooters. For example, in 2021 Colorado received over \$17 million dollars of these funds including \$3 million for hunter education.

For the foregoing reasons, NRA supports HB 1168. Finally, I'd like to thank the sponsors of this bill for their leadership on these important issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Travis L. Couture-Lovelady". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Travis L. Couture-Lovelady
Colorado State Director
NRA-ILA

CC: Senator Sonya Jaquez Lewis
Senator Don Coram
Senator Rhonda Fields
Senator Nick Hinrichsen
Senator Cleave Simpson
Senator Jerry Sonnenberg