

House Bill 770  
March 22, 2007  
Presented by Bob Lane  
Senate Business, Labor and Economic Affairs Committee

Madam Chairman and committee members, for the record I am Bob Lane, Chief Legal Counsel for Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP). I appear in support of HB 770, which establishes the Board of Medical Examiners as the entity to determine eligibility of an individual to receive a Permit to Hunt from a Vehicle.

We believe the Board of Medical Examiners is a more logical board to review and resolve any disputes as to whether or not a person meets the criteria established for hunting from a vehicle.

While we have not received many complaints specific to abuses of the Permit to Hunt from a Vehicle privilege, we have seen an increase in individuals who have been certified. In fact, approximately 80 percent of the individuals who are now certified have been certified since 2002 after the law changed and individuals were certified based on a new criteria that "if people are certified as unable to walk unassisted 600 yards over rough and broken ground while carrying 15 pounds within in one hour and are unable to handle and maneuver up to 25 pounds."

With that increase, we do anticipate the potential for more abuse of the privilege. We believe the Board of Medical Examiners, which includes 11 individuals, 8 of which are educated and licensed in the field of medicine, is an improvement over the previously established review board, which was a voluntary board and required that only 1 Montana licensed physician be a member.

For the above reasons, we urge your passage of HB 770.