



EXHIBIT 6  
DATE 2/3/09  
HB 382

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA  
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STATE & LOCAL AFFAIRS DIVISION  
BRIAN JUDY, MONTANA STATE LIAISON

TO: Members of the House Fish, Wildlife & Parks Committee  
FROM: Brian Judy, NRA-ILA Montana State Liaison  
DATE: February 3, 2009  
RE: House Bill 382 (Apprentice Hunting) – **SUPPORT**

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On behalf of the tens of thousands of National Rifle Association members who live in the State of Montana, I would like to register strong support for House Bill 382.

HB 382 would establish an apprentice hunting certificate that allows novice resident hunters to hunt in Montana under the direct supervision of a licensed, adult mentor-hunter prior to the apprentice completing a hunter education course. The bill is a component of the “Families Afield” initiative that is a partnership between NRA, United States Sportsmen’s Alliance, National Wild Turkey Federation and National Shooting Sports Foundation. The very simple goal of HB 382 is to increase hunter recruitment rates in Montana in order to preserve the state’s proud hunting heritage.

While Montana is the nation’s leader in hunter participation, it is currently in the bottom third of all states with regard to hunter recruitment. Researchers have found that for every 100 hunters who permanently quit hunting in Montana, only 56 new hunters replace them. This slide must be reversed and HB 382 will help in this effort.

Research shows that any regulation that stands in the way of people trying hunting for the first time will deter participation. This includes the current requirement that all prospective hunters complete hunter education. An apprentice hunting program allows citizens a “try it before they buy it” opportunity. Ultimately, they will become “hooked on hunting” and want to complete a hunter education course in order to hunt on their own. In the end, *more* people will complete hunter education and fully join the hunter ranks as a result.

The empirical evidence from the more than two dozen other states that have adopted similar programs shows that mentored hunting is the safest form of what is already one of the safest recreational activities in the country according to the National Safety Council. There is absolutely no reason to believe that Montana hunters will be any less safe and responsible than those in the rest of the country.

Please support House Bill 382 and help facilitate the recruitment of new hunters and, in turn, help preserve the future of hunting in Montana!