SENATE FISH AND GAME
EXHIBIT NO. 1
DATE Jan. 29, 2009
BILL NO. SB185

Senate Bill 185
January 29, 2009
Presented by Chris Smith
Senate Fish and Game Committee

Mr. Chairman and committee members, for the record I am Chris Smith, Deputy Director of Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP).

SB 185 would create a new type of license that could be purchased by two types of college student: either former Montana residents who are attending school out-of-state and have established residency there to reduce the cost of their education or non-residents from other states attending college in Montana. The legislature created a different license a few sessions ago that allows a former resident who is attending college in another state to hunt at a reduced rate relative to other non-residents, provided the student was born in, and graduated from high school in Montana. To date FWP has only issued three or four of those licenses. The approach outlined in SB 185 is much simpler for people to understand and for FWP to administer.

Hunter recruitment and retention is an important issue for state agencies across the country. Data suggest that two time periods may be important in recruiting and retaining hunters: early initiation to hunting, usually between the ages of 10 - 12 and continued participation during early adulthood when other demands impact a young person's time. Attending college is one of the major demands on most youth's time between ages 18 and 24. SB 185 would provide a simple and attractive opportunity for college students to continue hunting.

Importantly, SB 185 does not alter the hunter education requirements in place in Montana. FWP supports adoption of SB 185.