



May 3, 2023

The Honorable Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, Chair
Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 160
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for AB 293 (Alanis) – Lifetime Hunting/Fishing Licenses for Gold Star Family Members

Dear Assembly Member Bauer-Kahan:

Our organizations support AB 293 (Alanis), which would provide free lifetime hunting and fishing licenses to immediate family members of U.S. armed forces members who have died in battle or in support of other military activities.

Consistent with other California hunting and fishing licensing benefits that have historically been provided to members of the military, we believe it is appropriate to provide free lifetime licenses to spouses, parents, sons, daughters, brothers or sisters of fallen military personnel, especially in light of the significant sacrifices those families have made. Offering such licenses at no cost would be a relatively small gesture, and would help ensure that the families can afford to participate in the outdoors and enjoy the food, recreational, health and other benefits that hunting and fishing provide.

It's important to note that the number of people who would be eligible and, in fact, use the lifetime licenses offered would be small as compared with the total number of licensed hunters and fishermen in California. Thus, there should not be more than a minor fiscal impact to the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW); also, should the licensing benefits help recruit new hunters and fishermen, there may be some increase in revenue to DFW as licensees purchase other hunting and fishing related validations.

Please also note that DFW retains the authority to determine the proof necessary for Gold Star family members to obtain the licenses. And, that licenses shall only be granted to California residents who have not been convicted of a Fish and Game-related violation.

Sincerely,

Mark Hennelly, Vice President of Advocacy
California Waterfowl Association

Ric Ortega, President
Grassland Water District

James Stone, President
Nor-Cal Guides and Sportsmen's Association