



March 8, 2018

The Honorable Bill Quirk
Assemblymember, 20th District
State Capitol, Room 2163
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2787 (Quirk) – OPPOSE

The Northern California Guides and Sportsmen's Association (NCGASA) regrets to inform you of our opposition AB 2787, your bill which bans the manufacture, sale, or purchasing of a fishing weight or sinker in California that has no cross section greater than or equal to two centimeters in length, is under 50 grams in mass, and contains more than 0.1 percent lead by weight.

NCGASA is an association of over 450 guides and thousands of sportsmen and women that work together to protect and increase hunting and fishing opportunities throughout California. NCGASA acts as a voice to represent all people who use California's waterways and lands. NCGASA works closely with many other conservation organizations to make sure we leave a legacy to our children and grandchildren; the same access to outdoor recreation and appreciation for abundant wildlife and fisheries that was instilled in so many of us.

While a limited number of North Eastern states have instituted a partial ban on small lead fishing weights where Loons exist, these states nor any others to the best of our knowledge have banned weights or sinkers as large as 50 grams (1 ¾ ounces). Additionally, the California Department of Toxic Substance Control has extensively discussed the issue of lead in fishing tackle and were not able to identify any California-based research that identifies lead weights or sinkers as a significant source of harm to any wildlife in California.

According to a 2015 study, developed by the California Sportfishing League, fishing license sales have decreased by over 55% since 1980. The high cost of fishing licenses in California is identified as a leading barrier to participation in the sport. In fact, California is the most expensive state in the nation to purchase a fishing license. Further, the decline in hunting and fishing licenses has been identified as one of the primary drivers in the systemic budget deficit that is plaguing the Department of Fish and Wildlife. AB 2787, as drafted, will further drive up the cost of fishing and limit access.

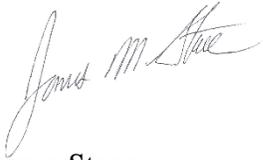
It would also have lasting implications for communities that are dependent on outdoor tourism and recreation for tax revenue and jobs. Those are our jobs...we are the men and women who provide guide services on California's riverways and lakes for the tens of thousands of

recreational fishermen and women who participate in this past time. Our industry is already decimated by declining fisheries runs, especially salmon. Many of our members already leave their families for months on end to guide in Oregon, Washington, and Alaska because they can no longer make ends meet in California. We do not need additional pressures that would further exacerbate the problem.

AB 2787 would also undermine the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's new R3 program (Retention, Recruitment and Reactivation) that aims to increase fishing participation efforts that are critical to funding state conservation and hatchery programs. R3 is part of a national effort to increase the number of hunters and anglers who participate in these traditional outdoor recreation pursuits.

Absent any real and objective analysis, this legislation poses unreasonable economic burden on anglers and the communities dependent on outdoor tourism. Therefore, NCGASA regrettably opposes this measure, and asks that you withdraw your proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James M. Stone".

James Stone
President, Northern California Guides and Sportsmen's Association

Cc: Chuck Bonham, Director, California Department of Fish and Wildlife