

## Testimony of Hughes Andry

*President, Sportco Marketing*

*Chairman, Government Affairs Committee, American Sportfishing Association*

Before the Pennsylvania Senate Game & Fisheries Committee

[Date]

**Chairman [Name], Vice Chairman [Name], and Members of the Committee**, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Hughes Andry. I'm the President of Sportco Marketing, a family-owned company that's been in the sportfishing industry for decades. We currently employ 19 sales reps and staff members and have a collective 423 years of experience in the hunting, fishing, camping industry. Our reps service over 900 dealers across the SW, UM & NE United States, 80 of which are here in the State of Pennsylvania.

I also serve as Chairman of the Government Affairs Committee for the American Sportfishing Association, the national trade association that represents the interests of the recreational fishing industry.

I'm here today to speak to you about something that's not just close to my heart, but vital to our economy, our communities, and our conservation heritage — and that's recreational fishing.

Across the country, recreational fishing is a powerhouse. Nearly **58 million Americans** go fishing each year. It's more than just a pastime — it's an engine of economic activity.

Nationally, recreational fishing generates **\$230 billion** in economic output annually and supports **1.1 million jobs**. But the impact isn't just national — it's right here in Pennsylvania.

In Pennsylvania alone, over **1.1 million anglers** take to the water each year. These anglers support **32,280 jobs** and contribute **\$5.7 billion** annually to the state's economy. That includes money spent at local bait and tackle shops, sporting goods stores, boat dealers, restaurants, and hotels. In many rural communities, that economic activity is a lifeline. Sportco Marketing is proud to be part of this economy. We work closely with manufacturers, retailers, and conservation groups across the country — and I can tell you that Pennsylvania stands out as one of the most passionate and vibrant fishing states in the country.

But beyond the dollars and cents, fishing plays a deeper role in our society. It's a uniquely accessible activity — anyone, regardless of age, income, or background, can enjoy a day on the water. For many families, fishing is a way to bond. It teaches patience, responsibility, and respect for nature. And at a time when so many kids are glued to screens, fishing gets them outside — connecting with the outdoors and building a lifelong appreciation for natural resources.

That connection to nature isn't just feel-good — it translates into real conservation outcomes. Anglers are among the most committed conservationists in America. Through the **Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund**, anglers and boaters contribute approximately **\$800 million** every year in excise taxes on fishing equipment, boats, and fuel. These dollars go straight into habitat restoration, fish stocking, access improvements, and education efforts — including many right here in Pennsylvania.

In fact, Pennsylvania receives tens of millions of dollars each year through this fund. That money helps support the work of the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission and ensures that future generations have access to healthy, fishable waters.

I encourage this Committee and the full Senate to continue supporting policies that grow fishing participation, protect access to public waters, and invest in conservation. That includes funding for boating and fishing infrastructure, protecting clean water, and ensuring that fisheries management is based on sound science and stakeholder input.

Fishing is more than a sport — it's a way of life for millions of Americans. It brings people together, drives local economies, and fuels one of the most successful conservation models in the world.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak. I'd be happy to answer any questions.