My name is Dave Hogan and I live in Monroe Mi.
I am a licensed Master Falconer and have practiced the sport of falconry for over 40 years. I am here to represent the 102 federal and state licensed falconers of Michigan. I and the falconers of this state support HB 4757.
Falconry is the sport of hunting game with a trained raptor ; a bird of prey. It is the most highly regulated sport in the country. To become a falconer one must first pass a joint federal and state administered test on the care, training and biology of raptors, serve a two year apprenticeship under a general or master falconer and construct federally regulated housing facilities and equipment which must be inspected by a conservation officer before one can obtain a bird.
The use of wild caught raptors are essential to our sport and is actually mandated by state and federal falconry regulations which require apprentice falconers to practice the sport and serve their apprenticeship with a wild caught raptor - which they themselves must capture as a juvenile or passage bird and must be either a red-tailed hawk or American kestrel, both of which are abundant in this state.
In 1999 the Michigan hawking club together with the MDNR and MUCC enacted legislation which allowed for a very controlled take of wild raptors for falconry use. That bill engineered by MUCC's Sam Washington and Dennis Knapp and sponsored by then Senator Dianne Byrum allowed for the take of 25 raptors from the wild for falconry use. This bill had a sunset clause in Jan of 2004 to make sure there was no impact on wild raptor populations. New legislation in 2003 extended the sunset another 5 years and allowed the issuance of an additional 2 permits to capture northern goshawks. That bill did sunset at the end of last year. That leaves the falconers of Michigan without the ability to obtain wild raptors for falconry use.
The Michigan hawking club in concurrence with the M.D.N.R.- Michigan Audubon and MUCC have worked together to propose this new legislation sponsored by Representative Goeff Hansen to allow a wild take of raptors for falconry use in Michigan.
This bill will not affect wild raptor populations.
The bill before you seeks to continue to allow by law the use of wild caught raptors for falconry. The language of this bill will allow falconry and take regulations , seasons and limitations on species and numbers of raptors to be caught for falconry to be controlled by the Natural Resource Commission. These regulations will be based on sound biological data supplied or offered by the DNR with input from the scientific community

along with the MI. Audubon Society and the MI. Hawking Club. The falconers of Michigan and all interested parties support this move by the legislature.

We applaud the efforts of the chair of this committee, Rep Sheltrown for his work to help the falconers of this state work through the legislative obstacles encountered on this issue and appreciate his support.

This bill enjoys bi partisan support and is supported by the MDNR, MAS,.MHC and MUCC.

As you know the sun has set on the legislation which allowed falconers the opportunity to practice this aspect of our sport. I respectfully ask you to act on this bill as quickly as possible.

I personally along with the rest of the falconers of MI would like to thank Representative Goeff Hansen for sponsoring this bill and this committee for your support of falconry and your support of a continued wild take of raptors for falconry use.

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