

Rep. Elsenheimer offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 454.

A resolution to encourage public high schools to offer hunter safety classes as an elective.

Whereas, Hunting and trapping are Michigan traditions that date back to pre-statehood. Fur trapping was a way of life for many in the 1800s. The Michigan Department of Conservation was established in 1919. Over 865,000 Michigan residents participate in one or more hunting seasons each year. However, Michigan has experienced a decline in the number of individuals hunting since 1998. As the number of hunters declines, the age of those who do hunt has continued to increase, with more than half of Michigan's hunters now over the age of 41; and

Whereas, An individual born after January 1, 1960, must pass a certified hunter safety course before obtaining their first hunting license in the state of Michigan. Michigan has established a first-rate hunter safety program that teaches individuals about safe and ethical hunting. Hunter safety is not just for students interested in hunting. Hunter safety includes information on conservation, protecting our environment, wildlife identification, and firearm safety. Unfortunately, the number of youths participating in hunter safety has declined in recent years. Part of this may be attributed to lack of mentors guiding young hunters through the hunter safety certification process. It may also be due to difficulty in accessing hunter safety courses; and

Whereas, Offering hunter safety classes, as an elective, at the public high schools will afford more students the ability to take the class. Whether interested in hunting, natural resource management, or shooting sports, hunter safety, taken as an elective, will offer students another educational opportunity possibly not available elsewhere. By opening additional avenues for securing the Hunter Safety Certificate, we break down barriers that keep some young people hunters from participating and encourage involvement in the many hunting opportunities in Michigan. The future of hunting lies with Michigan youth. Teaching them to be responsible, safe hunters will help preserve the hunting heritage in Michigan; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we encourage public high schools to offer hunter safety classes as an elective; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Michigan Department of Education, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and the Governor.