

# Hunting and fishing amendment guarantees rights

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An increasing number of Americans are stepping away from their computer screens and reality television shows and heading to the beautiful outdoors to immerse themselves in nature and participate in wildlife activities, according to the 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation.

The 2011 National Survey is the 12th of a series of surveys that have been conducted every five years since 1955, providing preliminary information of fish and wildlife-related recreation across the United States.

In 2011, 90.1 million Americans (38 percent of the U.S. population 16 years and older) engaged in some form of hunting, fishing or wildlife-associated activity. Hunting participation alone increased 9 percent in the U.S. from 2006 to 2011 and the number of anglers (fishermen) increased by 11 percent; meaning nearly four out of ten people you meet participate in some form of wildlife recreation.

Since 1996, 15 states have passed constitutional amendments guaranteeing fishing, hunting and harvesting wildlife as constitutional rights; Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Louisiana, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Many Kentuckians were surprised to see a new proposal on Tuesday's ballot introducing an amendment to make hunting, fishing and harvesting wildlife constitutionally protected rights. Although several voters were unaware of this new legislation, it was passed by an overwhelming amount of support across the Bluegrass.

The amendment on Tuesday's ballot read:

Are you in favor of amending the Kentucky constitution to state that the citizens of Kentucky have the personal right to hunt, fish, and harvest wildlife, subject to laws and regulations that promote conservation and preserve the future of hunting and fishing, and to state that public hunting and fishing shall be a preferred means of managing and controlling wildlife?

Amanda Copas, a 23-year-old human resources management major at Eastern said she had no idea that the amendment was going to be on the ballot.

"I voted no because they didn't really give me enough information to make an informed choice," Copas said.

The amendment, also know as House Bill 1, was introduced in Kentucky's 2011 legislative session by State representative Leslie Combs of Pikeville and co-sponsor Greg Stumbo. The bill was brought forth in an effort to prevent lobbyists and special interests groups from infringing upon the Kentuckians' rights to hunt, fish, and harvest wildlife.

Although these rights are not currently being questioned, the amendment protects Kentucky hunters and fishermen from any future attacks that may have been made by animal-rights groups.

Chase Wininger, 23, an Eastern graduate from Shelbyville, said he voted yes to the amendment for many reasons.

"I believe controlled hunting and fishing, as it is now with biologists and law enforcement working together, is the most effective

means of controlling wildlife population," Wininger said.

Wininger, who has been an active outdoorsman for most of his life, works directly with the Fish and Wildlife Foundation on several projects through his job with Headfirst Performance Services.

"I also believe that voting an amendment into place is really democracy at its best and I wanted to be sure to participate, especially considering that the amendment addresses an issue that hits so close to home," Wininger said.

Kentucky passed the amendment with support from 84.49 percent of voters joining 15 other states in preserving hunting and fishing rights in their state constitutions.

Tyler Barnes, 21, Psychology major, was not aware that the amendment would be on the ballot but voted yes.

"I have always been a big supporter of hunting and fishing. I think it's very beneficial to population control and I don't think the government should ever be able to take that away from us," Barnes said.

# Cuba trip exposes students to justice issues abroad

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Fresh off an October trip to Cuba, the one program in College of Justice and Safety is looking for students to attend a trip next spring.

At an information session Tuesday, Nov. 13 several attendees of last month's trip to Cuba gave detailed descriptions of their trip to the communist country.

Chuck Fields, professor in the school of justice studies, oversees the 10-day trip, which counts for credit as a three credit hour course: CRJ 423 – Justice and Revolution in Cuba. Fields said Cuba is one of the safest countries in the Western Hemisphere in terms of street crime, but it is becoming increasingly difficult for him to take students into the country for the learning projects.

"Americans can only travel with 'license' from the treasury department," Fields said. "That's what is becoming harder and harder to get."

Fields said he has taken students to Cuba three times and the total cost for the trip is between \$2400-\$2800, not including \$50-75 a day for meals and other activities. Those who attend will visit cities such as Havana, Santa Clara, Trinidad and Pinar del Rio.

As a part of the curriculum attendees met with the Union of Cuban Jurists and the Cuban Society for Constitutional and Administrative law. Other than that the trip is mostly historical and cultural, Fields said.

"Cuba fascinates me," Fields said, "since I was a kid their culture, the people the food have fascinated me."

Salome Nnoromele, director of African/African American studies attended the trip and said she was drawn to the trip to see race relations in Cuba as well as the Afro-Caribbean culture.

"As a culture fanatic, I always like to see what a place looks like," Nnoromele said. "[This was one of the most amazing trips I've been a part of."

Nnoromele noted the creativity at a store she visited and said she believed the austerity of the environment makes it necessary for people to make vibrant art with limited resources.

"I wish I could have bought the whole store, because I've never seen that much creativity in one place," Nnoromele said.

Rachel Noble, 25, a human services graduate student from Richmond said one of her favorite aspects was the people to people exchange.

"The biggest impact for me was the interaction with people," Noble said. "I

didn't fear the people, I feared Cuba. People were educated, warm and welcoming. I didn't expect that at all. One thing they said was: "Our governments are not friends but we as people are friends."

Noble said it was important to get to experience how people exist in a communist country, but said she has a greater appreciation for our government, democracy and our freedom.

"I think students should travel because you have the right and freedom to do so," Noble said. "Also we should show others we are willing to learn about other cultures. It's important to see it for yourself."

Crystal Bryson, 22, history major from Dayton, Ohio, took the trip for an independent study class. She said part of her study was to read books on Cuba and then write a personal essay reflecting on the experiences and what she learned.

"If you just talk to people on the street they are pro-Cuba but not necessarily pro-Castro," Bryson said. "If you want to get the whole picture, it's worth it to go."

Bob Turpin, 71, former director of purchasing at Eastern, retired from Eastern in 2003 and he attended the trip as an unofficial faculty member. Turpin said he had a different perspective on the trip because he lived during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

"I was the old guy on the trip, but they didn't have to take care of me," Turpin said. At the information session, he explained many of the main differences between the U.S. and Cuba including the lack of advertising for things like Coca-Cola and the presence of government propaganda as well as the lack of broadband internet, but rather dial-up connections.

Lanceri Seivwright, 19, English teaching major with a Spanish minor from Lexington, is considering the trip with the Eastern group. Seivwright's family on her father's side is from Cuba and she has not met any of them who live in Cuba.

"I want to try to find my family and learn about my culture," Seivwright said. "You can't see things and learn about them without going yourself."

Fields said aims to take 13-15 students, but up to 20 at the most if interested. He said there will also be slots available for faculty or administrators.

"It's not only good for our students to see the unique social system, our students can benefit a lot from seeing the failures as well as the successes [in Cuba]," Fields said. "[Cuba] is only 90 miles apart [from the U.S.] but to some it's like a century," Fields said.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHUCK FIELDS

Students and faculty in the criminal justice department took an annual ten day trip to Cuba as part of three three credit hour course, Justice and Revolution in Cuba.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHUCK FIELDS

From left to right: Sarah Absher, Melissa Pujol, Crystal Bryson, Felicia Ford, Jonathan Sherrod, Professor Chuck Fields, Andrew Merriman, Rachel Noble, Rey Gonzalez, Bob Tuepin, Andrew Walton, Zachary Lamb and Professor Salome Nnoromele.

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