



NATIONAL
LOON CENTER

Dear Minnesota House of Representatives,

We appreciate the opportunity to comment about H. F. 157, which would phase out the manufacture, sale and use of certain lead fishing tackle within a sensible timeframe.

Widely distributed scientific research shows that lead fishing sinkers and jigs are toxic to common loons when ingested. Mortality studies on loons indicate that lead poisoning is among the top three causes of loon mortality. Similarly, dire effects have been found in mortality studies of trumpeter swans and bald eagles.

Toxic lead tackle frequently endures in freshwater systems for decades at the bottom of a lake, and its effect as a toxin remains – a hazard that grows cumulatively over time as more tackle is lost to the lake.

The good news is that nonlead tackle alternatives are available, enabling Minnesotans to pursue the treasured pastime of angling, while lessening our impacts to cherished species such as the beloved loon. Phasing out potentially harmful lead tackle demonstrates our commitment to furthering our shared angling legacy while also doing so responsibly as Minnesotans who love the outdoors and wildlife.

Many states have already passed legislation to address this concern, including Washington, New Hampshire, New York, Maine, Massachusetts and Vermont. Minnesota proudly estimates that it contains 12,000 loons, well more than any other state in the “lower 48.”

The National Loon Center supports and embraces Minnesota’s legacy of angling on our more than 11,000 lakes. In this case, we can fish responsibly with simple alternatives that do not diminish the sport, while reducing mortalities to the most iconic bird of our great state. It is our opportunity to be a leader in efforts to conserve the loon.

We encourage you strongly to support H.F. 157, and enhance our angling tradition in a loon-friendly manner.

Sincerely,

Jon Mobeck
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