



March 31, 2025

Representative Heintzeman, Chair  
Environment and Natural Resources Committee  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Centennial Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Fischer, Chair  
Environment and Natural Resources Committee  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor Centennial Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

**RE: Concerns with elimination of shotgun zone**

Dear Chair Heintzeman, Chair Fischer, and Members of the Committee:

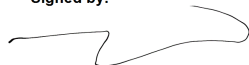
On behalf of the Olmsted County Board of Commissioners, I write to share our concerns with [HF 623](#) which repeals the shotgun zone during the regular firearms deer season. The county has significant safety concerns with expanding rifle use statewide given the topography, land use, population density, and structure density in our county.

Rochester, the third largest city in the state, is in Olmsted County. While the county has rural areas, our population is increasing and the county is becoming more urban and suburban. Olmsted County has many suburban residential developments, hobby farms, and cities that contain or adjoin woodlands and farm fields that are likely places for hunting and other game. With the very long trajectory for rifle shots we believe that repealing the shotgun only zone during the regular firearms deer season will place people at risk of injury or death and property at needless risk of damage.

If the Committee opts to move HF 623 forward, Olmsted County respectfully requests to be exempted from the proposed state law change so the shotgun only zone would remain in effect in Olmsted County. The county does not support language that would require yearly adoption of a county board resolution in order to remain in the shotgun use area. This practice is inconsistent with county board resolution processes.

Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

Signed by:  
  
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3/31/2025 | 2:36 PM CDT

Mark Thein, Chair  
Olmsted County Board of Commissioners  
mark.thein@olmstedcounty.gov