

STATE SENATOR • DEBORAH CHERRY • 26TH DISTRICT

Cherry Press Release

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Sen. Cherry Bill for Disabled Hunters Signed Into Law

Allows hunters with disabilities to use a colored flag indicating they are authorized to hunt from an off-road vehicle

LANSING - Yesterday Sen. Deb Cherry (D-Burton) and Governor Jennifer Granholm were joined by representatives from the Department of Natural Resources, Michigan United Conservation Clubs, and residents of Cherry's district for the ceremonial bill signing of Senate Bill 1498, now Public Act 365. It authorizes the use of a colored flag for a disabled hunter on an off-road vehicle (ORV), indicating that the person has a right to use it while hunting.

"The passage of this law is a victory for disabled hunters participating in one of Michigan's longest-held traditions," said Cherry. "This legislation will not only make hunting safer for those who require an off-road vehicle for access, but will help disabled hunters identify themselves to other hunters and prevent misunderstanding of why the vehicles are being used."

This bill was inspired by Vaughn Forystek of Burton. Forystek worked for two years to draw attention to the issues disabled hunters face when using ORVs to gain access to hunting areas. He had experienced harassment in the past from other hunters who thought he was only there to disturb them, not understanding he needed the ORV because of a disability.

"There are a lot of older guys in the woods these days, and some of us need help if we're going to continue hunting," said Forystek. "This state is so big, and I never realized the impact a person such as myself could have on making these kinds of changes."

"Some of my best bills come from my constituents," said Cherry.

SB 1498 amends Part 811 (Off-Road Recreation Vehicles) of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act. It was introduced by Sen. Cherry in September of 2008, and passed with unanimous bipartisan support.

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