

I am testifying in opposition to HB 1151. I am not going to give my opinion on the ethics of baiting, nor am I going to tell anecdotal stories to try and influence an emotional response. Instead, I will tell you that HB 1151 is irresponsible and lacks foresight. On the surface this bill is about baiting deer in North Dakota. However, the consequences of this bill have a much greater impact to the long term viability of not only deer, but other wildlife and natural resources we entrust our ND Game and Fish Department to manage.

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department is comprised of educated, science-based staff that were sought after and hired for their expertise in the management of this States wildlife, habitat, and natural resources. The management decisions they make are well researched, analyzed and scrutinized to make sound policy. Even though we may not like the short-term implications of some decisions, we can trust that these science-based decisions are made for the best interest and longevity of the wildlife resource.

If HB 1151 is allowed to move forward, it would not only reverse current ND Gamed and Fish Policy for managing Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), it will strip the department of their ability to utilize a economically responsible and efficient tool to slow the spread of the disease.

To manage CWD, currently 28 states have a full ban on baiting deer. Fourteen states allow baiting, but with restrictions. In other words, 42 states have either a full ban or a partial ban on baiting deer as policy to manage CWD. This includes our neighbors Minnesota, South Dakota and Montana.

On December 23, 2022 The United States Congress approved the **Chronic Wasting Disease Research and Management Act**. This legislation would allocate approximately \$70 million to the USDA for distribution to states and tribes for research and development of CWD policy. Recognizing that this legislation got bipartisan support, it should also be noted that our own Senator Hoeven was a lead sponsor of the bill.

Therefore, please leave the management of our wildlife and natural resources to the professionals and oppose HB 1151.

Thank you for your service,

Kerry Whipp