

TESTIMONY of MIKE McENROE
HB 1151
HOUSE ENERGY and NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Chairman Porter and members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee:

For the record, my name is Mike McEnroe of Fargo, ND. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB1151.

I am testifying as one who has hunted in North Dakota since 1961, had a career as a professional wildlife biologist and land manager, and spent 29 years as a Hunter Education instructor. I have hunted deer and big game in North Dakota since 1975.

I am opposed to HB 1151 and to the idea that the bill would prevent or prohibit the North Dakota Game and Fish Department from responsibly and scientifically managing our wildlife resources and North Dakotan's hunting opportunities.

You have heard that there is no science or are no facts to support the Department's baiting ban to reduce the transmission of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). This is totally and completely false! Please take a look at the Department's 2023 CWD Management and Surveillance Plan. There are 37 scientific, peer-reviewed reports on CWD studies and research conducted across the United States and Canada since the 1970s. The results of these studies overwhelmingly draws the conclusions that "to reduce the risk of CWD transmission and establishment through the unnatural concentration of cervids (deer), states should eliminate baiting and feeding of all wild cervids (deer)." This is the science and the considered opinion and position of some 23 states including Montana, South Dakota, and Minnesota that adjoin North Dakota.

You have heard that baiting is necessary or advisable to ensure our youth hunters are successful and continue as hunters and wildlife enthusiasts.

The ban on baiting is NOT about recruiting and retaining our youth hunters. It is about protecting and managing our deer herd so that those youth hunters will have deer to hunt 20 years from now.

Hunters and sportsmen/women for over 100 years have supported restrictions or regulations designed to limit personal choices and techniques in favor of protecting our wildlife resources. We have outlawed baiting for waterfowl hunting, live decoys, placed limits on cartridge or shell capacities on our firearms, restricted certain gauges or calibers from being used for hunting, set hunting seasons that protect wildlife during the breeding season and during the winter, prohibited night shooting and the use of spotlights. All these restrictions prevented someone's personal choices in preference of the benefit to the wildlife resource and to sportsmen overall.

Protecting our deer and big game populations from CWD transmission is another conservation practice that real sportsmen should support.

I urge you to support the Game and Fish Department's CWD Plan and give HB 1151 a DO NOT Pass vote.

Thank you.

Mike McEnroe, Fargo