

Dear legislators,

As a sportsman, I'm writing today in opposition of House Bill 1151 as it is written. The bill as currently written is very vague. It needs to be more specific and limited to special needs situations. Not only that it should be controlled and managed by the North Dakota Game Fish (NDGF), whom have the expertise in wildlife management.

North Dakota prides itself on accessibility for people with disabilities being able to hunt. There are groups for disabled veterans, quadriplegics, and others with limited mobility that assist in their hunting adventures. Therefore, allowing for baiting in these cases would be one of the special needs areas that should be allowed and supported.

If this bill is passed as written, it will prevent the NDGF from utilizing the tools they currently have to decrease or eliminate the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). Right now, NDGF has put a ban on baiting in specific hunting units that have the positive cases of CWD. The ban prevents the gathering of animals that possibly carry the disease from spreading it. North Dakota is not the only state that is dealing with the CWD and baiting issues at the fore front. The Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment (2022) stated that within a 15-year period the infection rates in mule deer have risen from approximately 3% to 70% where bating is widely used and not regulated. Do we want the same thing to happen in North Dakota?

This is not about the right to hunt your private land the way you desire or restricting your way of hunting. It is about preserving our wildlife for future generation and most importantly controlling the spread of disease. NDGF is not trying to take away hunting rights with the current measures put in place to control baiting. If the spread is not controlled for the example in the case of CWD, the population will be reduced to a point that licenses will be almost impossible to get.

In closing, my recommendation would be to continue allowing the NDGF to manage our wildlife as they are the experts, not legislators. Bans are easier to reverse or change and can be implemented on an as needed basis. Laws are more permanent and take a majority to change

Thanks, you for your time and I encourage you again to think of the long-term effects and what's best when placing a vote for this bill

Pat