

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in regard to HB1151 and my support of it.

As a deer hunter for 38 years, I am concerned that my rights as an outdoors person and landowner are being infringed upon for no just reason. It also seems the ND Game and Fish (NDG&F) is doing a major overreach in the banning of baiting/feeding for deer due to Chronic Wasting Disease when there is little to no evidence to support such moves. The scientific research or proof that supports CWD being 100% fatal in deer, and/or that baiting/feeding helps to spread CWD is non-existent. So, the NDG&F, in an attempt to stop the supposed spread to CWD, is allowing attractant/bait to be put out for the purpose of taking pictures of deer with a camera in bait banned units, but it's not allowed to harvest a deer with a weapon using that same attractant in bait banned units. That makes no sense and has nothing to do with the supposed "spread" of CWD. Instead, it sounds like someone is trying to tell us how we should hunt.

There has been 20 years of CWD testing in ND, involving 40,000 deer. Of those 40,000 deer, 70 tested positive, 69 of which were hunter harvested and killed by a bullet or broadhead. The other positive case was a deer found dead by Game and Fish and they chalked it up to CWD because the stomach was empty. That is less than 1% positive rate and no proof that CWD kills deer because all but one of the positive cases were brought in by hunters, the other because it had an empty stomach (starvation?). The subject of whether CWD even exists is still in question, but the debate that no deer have been proven to actually die from CWD in ND isn't. IF the hysteria over CWD and how easily it is spread is true, why is it only found in 1-4 deer out of 1,000? It's because many of the "facts" about CWD and how or why it is spread are questionable.

The NDG&F uses the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Technical Report out of Washington, DC to come up with their CWD management plans. I invite you to read it over. In that report, 30 different words that leave doubt are used over and over as there doesn't seem to be much concrete, scientific, or factual about it. Here are a few examples: the word "can" was used 12 times, the word "likely" was used 10 times, the word "may" was used 46 times, the words "may be" were used 18 times. Yet over \$100,000,000 has been spent nationwide on testing and other CWD "issues". That money would be much better spent in other areas of deer health than chasing CWD. Alas, state agencies and money go hand in hand, unfortunately a lot of times common sense and what the people of the state want don't factor into it. OK, aside from the lack of science and facts that prove CWD is 100% fatal to deer, or the fact that NDG&F allows bait to be put out for pictures, but not for hunting, and the contradicting rules they have in place in bait ban units. The other argument

that has been presented when it comes to baiting/feeding is "ethics". If there was ever a slippery slope on someone telling another person what is right or wrong when it comes to hunting, this is it. Bottom line, if you want to hunt over bait, do it. If you don't want to, don't. Nobody can tell me what is right or wrong based on their thoughts or beliefs. Both of my kids shot their first archery deer with the help of bait. My son was 9, and my daughter was 16, BOTH had the most amazing experience because of it! The odds of a well-placed and lethal shot are exponentially higher with the help of bait, than without. What is unethical about that? Instead, is it better and more ethical to be slinging arrows and bullets as deer pass by, not knowing the exact yardage, unable to get them to stop, wounding them with low percentage shots, etc.? This argument is similar to rifle hunters looking down on muzzleloader hunters, who look down on compound bow hunters, who look down on recurve hunters, and vice versa because they feel the way others hunt is unethical. Hunt how you want! Both of my kids are hooked on hunting now because of their first few experiences they had in the deer stand and the success they had with the help of bait. I could say the same for the older generation of hunters that I know who physically aren't able to walk far into the woods, climb trees, or quickly be ready for a shot opportunity as a deer approaches. Hunting over bait, where things can happen a little slower, or a little more often, has brought them many great experiences and has kept them afield for years longer. For me, as I've gotten older, it's more about the management of the deer herd in the area I hunt. It's easier for me to pick out the mature and older deer as I can study them for longer periods of time, and simply watching the interaction of deer gives me great pleasure. Right now, in unit 2B where I do the majority of my hunting, I'd normally be supplemental feeding the deer to help them get through the harsh winter. Instead, due to the confusion of baiting/feeding, and the fact a CWD positive deer was shot by a hunter last year 27 miles away in Minnesota, the deer in my area are digging and pawing through 3' of snow to try to find a small morsel of food. The inevitable winter die off of even a handful of deer due to starvation is still way more than CWD has ever been proven to kill. Finally, there are dozens of extremely knowledgeable people that have degrees and a lifetime of experience in testing and observing whitetail deer that do not believe in, or support, the CWD hysteria. If you are going to listen to just one of them, I would encourage you to see what Dr. James Kroll (aka Dr. Deer) has to say about it. He is substantially more qualified, in my opinion, than anyone in Washington, DC or the North Dakota Game and Fish in regard to CWD.

Even though several agencies, departments, and associations within the state of ND have been saying they rely on the "science", and "science

based” research, etc. to support CWD and the banning of using bait, the fact is CWD has yet to be proven fatal to deer even though it's been around for decades. Again, not one deer has been proven to die from CWD, and the banning of baiting is uncalled for and unsupported.
Please PASS HB1151.

Thank you for your time.
John Lien