

To: North Dakota Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee

Re: HB1151

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Jay Gotta of Bismarck. I respectfully submit my testimony in support of HB1151, the North Dakota Deer Baiting bill.

I have followed this bill with keen interest as it has progressed through the legislative process. I have read and listened to opinions from individuals on both sides of the bill, as well as the testimony of our Game & Fish Department. After reflecting on everything stated about the cons of the bill, I conclude that opponents want us to "trust the science" and "leave game management to the experts."

Chronic Wasting Disease has been known since the 1960's. According to the CDC, after more than 50 years, the best that science can tell us is that scientists "believe" that CWD can be transferred from animal to animal through direct contact. I am opposed to a state agency eliminating hunter rights based upon belief.

Our department concedes that a ban on baiting will only slow the spread of CWD at best. In exchange for potentially slowing the spread of CWD, the department has dictated that sportsmen give up their hunting right to pursue a harvest in a manner they enjoy.

I do not believe that a state agency should have the authority to eliminate our hunting rights. Only our elected leaders accountable to its citizens have the authority to alter our basic rights. I urge your support of HB1151 and protect our hunting rights.