

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate,

I am writing you today in opposition of HB 1151, as a lifelong hunter, outdoorsman and conservationist.

I have volunteered thousands of hours and dollars over the course of my 34 years. I am a Life Member of North Dakota Bowhunter's Association, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, National Rifle Association, Missouri Basin Bowmen, American Bear Foundation and annual member of the Pope and Young Club, Wild Sheep Foundation, Compton's Traditional Archery Club, Professional Bowhunter's Society, and others.

To put it briefly, my life revolves around hunting with my wife and family, while supporting the wild lands and critters that I hold so dear. While we can never satisfy everyone, I strive to do what is best for our PUBLIC wildlife resource, and for the majority of outdoor enthusiasts, now and in the future. Having taken my first deer with a bow at age 8, I have never found it necessary to bait a big game animal. Sometimes successful hunts don't conclude with a harvest. That said, we have amazing hunting opportunities in North Dakota, and I find it irresponsible to risk our wildlife simply because some individuals cannot be bothered to put in the time and effort to learn the woodsmanship and hunting skills that baiting substitutes for.

Many of the opinions that you are bound to digest will simply portray this bill as a "my rights" issue. I remind you that hunting is not a right, it is a privilege that countless hunters and conservationists have earned for not only us, but future generations. If this was just a private property issue, could the same not also be said for things like bag limits and legal hunting hours? Another defense often used is the youth, and how they can't be presented with opportunities without bait. I counter that if more of the mentors teaching them had the skills to hunt without bait, that the kids would benefit much more from learning said skills.

A debate often thrown around is "Where is the science?". It is quite available; however, science is rarely dealt with in absolutes. Science is nearly always a theory, backed up by probabilities and statistics. That is why no one can promise something when it comes to methods of preventing the spread of a given disease. If the G&F has this scientifically-proven method removed from their quiver, chances are that remaining tools will have to be reinforced.

In 25+ years of attending ND G&F Advisory Board meetings, I could probably count on one hand how many I missed in my region. Over that time, I have had the pleasure of getting to know many of our fine Department employees. I will be the first to tell you that our G&F staff are passionate and regularly go far above and beyond. I have hunted in many other states, and would not hesitate to say that we have the best Department I've ever encountered.

I encourage you to allow the fantastic professionals at the ND G&F to do what they have always done, and protect our PUBLIC resource for folks of North Dakota, not only today, but into the future. Please vote NO on House Bill 1151.

Sincerely,

Nevin Jenner – Williston, 701-570-0250