

Senate Natural Resources Committee members on HB 1151

My name is Gabe Thompson from Antler ND the 4th in a 6th generation farm and ranching operation and a former instructor in our churches youth archery program Bethel Crossed Bows where we introduce 40 plus kids a year to the sport of archery and bow hunting for 18 years now

As a rancher I understand very well the issue of animal disease and as the former chair of the Animal Health Committee for the ND Stockmans Assoc am well versed in the prion diseases of which CWD is one. And while real, just as "Mad Cow" was used by orgs with ulterior motives to further an agenda to end eating beef , CWD is being used as well to push an agenda also

As said yes CWD is real but the facts and science are being used to push the ethical issue hunters and the G&F have with baiting which eventually the discussion ALWAYS turns to in forums and G&F advisory meetings. In my opinion what is not "ethical" is to tell a young kid that just shot their first deer , a 70 something year old neighbor lady that shot her last deer, or a handicapped person taking a nice buck or even a healthy young man wanting to position a deer for a clean shot at a known yardage to prevent wounding an animal (all of which we have had done on our ranch all with no fee) that using a tool such as bait is not hunting and they are not hunters for doing so .....which our G&F director stood by and let happen at the last live streamed advisory meeting the NDGF held pitting one group of hunters against another.

The numbers ....

Only 1 deer in 13 years of aggressive testing has been found dead in the wild with CWD only 1 ( not an epidemic)

The majority of limited numbers of positives the last two years have come from a unit baiting has been banned in for 13 years

The NDGF killed 50 plus deer in one area searching for CWD .....0 positives ( all the meat was disposed of)

CWD like the prion disease Scrappies in sheep has been around for decades ... it is only now being found because it is being actively tested for

As a rancher we ALWAYS have deer yarded up in our ranch yard, this year it is roughly 400( the year before CWD was first found because of mismanagement of the population it was 650) and this occurs for 5 months or longer

Common sense tells us THAT along with the natural interaction of a highly social animal is what is and will continue to spread CWD and the tools of baiting or food plots ( both of which the G&F science says increases risk ) plays a very minimal if any role

Ask why the G&F bans hunting over bait but not food plots or feeding of deer year round ( they actually pay you to plant food plots) when BOTH are meant to attract congregate and hold deer to an area ( food plots for much longer periods and far greater numbers of deer ... we have 400 in a 7 acre plot of corn as we speak) and the G&F science says the CWD prion can live forever in the soils food plots are repeatedly planted on and on the leaves of the plants in the food plot the deer repeatedly browse day after day for months ....

Ethics and jealousy of rifle only hunters seeing archery hunters posting pictures of large bucks they harvested prior to rifle season on social media is what is driving this narrative ... when pressed the G&F admits it .. so the tool of baiting over a small pile of corn ( 20 yards /archery) is being banned but hunting over a food plot (200 yards/rifle) is not

The NDG&F even includes a portion of their online hunter safety class regarding ethics of hunting where it is specifically mentions hunting over bait as unethical driving home what the ban on hunting over bait but not food plots is all about

Please support common sense allowing hunters to manage population and keep opportunities for ALL hunters regardless of what tools they use to hunt, with a do pass on HB 1151

Thank you