

Hi, my name is Lee Zimmerman. I am an avid sportsman, landowner, farmer, dairyman and outfitter. My wife Kristi and I have 4 children; Ethen, Mason, Bryson, and Emerson from ages 15 to 9. We reside in the Sandhills of Denbigh ND and have lived here for 27 years. Our agricultural land and surroundings are abundant with Deer, Moose, Turkeys and waterfowl. Over the years we have developed the land for agricultural purposes to feed our livestock and this has definitely played a huge role in the abundance of wildlife in the area.

I am writing today in support of HB 1151. The restrictions that the North Dakota Game and Fish have enforced on the use of hunting big game over bait in specified units to control the spread of chronic wasting disease is unjustified and counterproductive, let me explain why.

Hunting is an option as baiting should be, the choice to do so or not has adversely affected hunters who are disadvantaged whether this may be a youth, elderly, nonland owner or handicapped sportsman. Bait or no bait, deer are as social as humans, they travel the same corridors to and from feeding and bedding areas as do humans. Deer lick, groom, swap saliva amongst each other as do humans. Deer all stop on the trail where there is a low hanging branch and whether they have head gear or not they rub their face all over these "licking branches", this is for marking territory or just socializing with one another. You have all seen the kid in the shopping cart at Walmart that is digging in his nose, smiling at you and then rubs his hands all over the cart, and what about the kid that is licking the window while you wait in line at the Motor Vehicle Department, how is this any different. This is how these animals socialize, whether there is a bucket of feed on the ground or 20,000 tons of silage what is the difference? The deer commute on the same path to and from regardless if there is 5 together or 50 together, green grass, or 2 foot of snow they eventually end up at the same place. Not to mention water sources, I have watched hundreds of deer drink from the same pond and groom one another before or after by licking and smelling one another as a new animal arrives to water.

Boundaries-I live 3 miles from a unit where baiting is an option, in the wintertime our farm will more than double the normal number of deer, turkeys and small game. These animals travel 5-10 miles to a winter range, we definitely have been that! The deer and turkeys must not have received the memo that this is a restricted unit! We have large amounts of corn silage, grain corn, wheat mid pellets, screenings and alfalfa hay that is all in our feed yards. As a landowner I'm not complaining nor am I asking for someone to feed the wildlife for us, our quantities and supplies of feed are so spread out that you would need a high fenced area 1 mile by 1 mile to contain these ingredients on 2 separate locations, like I said, I'm not complaining, for years we have fed the wildlife away from our feed yards October through April to control the damage that occurs on our expensive commodities. We leave acres of standing crop not just as food plots for hunting but because we care for the wildlife also. This has helped keep the animals at large away from our feed areas and cattle pens along with predators that harm our livestock. We have learned that if we can spread the feed out and use multiple locations to feed, this keeps the animals less concentrated and more spread out, isn't this what we want to achieve? If you have 75 people that are doing this whether for viewing or hunting, feeding these animals in different areas but in the same unit, wouldn't this help keep the animals more spread out, I sure think so as we have seen a major concentration to our feed yards the past 2 years. Do you really believe that CWD just appeared these last few years, let's be real, this has been around for numerous years, the fact that they think baiting will lessen the spread is ridiculous. These are wild creatures that are adaptive to change. They will continue to congregate into herds of 50 or more, stay in herds of 5 or less but one thing is for

certain, the constant grooming, licking, smelling, saliva swapping with one another will never be stopped.

In closing, we will not prevent this whether there is baiting or no baiting. Agriculture, food plots, cropland, watering holes are all a necessity to keep our wildlife alive and thriving in the state of North Dakota. As landowners and sportsmen, we care about conservation and our rights. As a parent and avid hunter, I care about the next generation and our youth. Why should baiting be controlled in one area and not another, hell, why should this even be talked about. There is no better sight then watching a herd of deer pour out of the trees to feed in an alfalfa field for the evening, turkeys flying out of the roost to a fresh cut corn field as the sun comes out, or a big bull moose roaming the prairie in the fall looking for a mate. These are all examples of things that my family can witness on most given days where we live. I would like to thank you for taking the time to read this and would welcome any opportunity to further the discussion on this issue. Please vote "YES" on HB 1151.

Sincerely,

Lee Zimmerman



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