

HB 1151 – Support Testimony
Sixty-eighth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota

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Menoken ND
3/15/23

Dear Committee Member –

I am writing in support of HB 1151 as it is currently proposed on 3/15/23 and I urge you to please move it forward without major modifications that would strip it of its intended purpose. Please let the people speak through a vote on the legislative floor.

Support for HB1151: My family and I feel strongly that this bill is needed to realign sportsmen with the hunting resource that has been gradually pulled away from them over the last decade, through the North Dakota Game and Fish's (NDG&F) gradually increasing restrictions on baiting.

Natural Immunity: According to Dr Christopher Seabury a professor at the College of Veterinary Medicine at Texas A&M and whom is a foremost expert in CWD genomic predictive research, there is a tendency for genomic resistance to CWD in deer that is nearly 20-30%. *In essence nearly 1/3 of the deer population may hold the genetic makeup to be resistant to CWD.* This phenomenon is also seen in areas of states where government agencies eradicated large groups of deer due to a CWD positive and found that a significant slice of the exterminated deer were CWD negative. Dr Seabury is working closely with the USDA as well as the university, to continue this ground breaking work that is uncovering that mother nature is caring for her own and natural immunity is a real thing.

If Sheep Can Do It So Can Deer: Scrappies is a similar disease that is no longer prevalent in our sheep population due to the *coadaptation of host versus pathogen* over generations of sheep. CWD in deer was found as recent as 1960, so only about 60 generations of deer have been through this adaptation period. It takes time, but mother nature will figure this out, not mandates issued by agencies that have failed to work in other states and will reduce hunter opportunity and turn people away from the sport.

Previous Attempts On Baiting Bans: In the 2007 legislative session, the NDG&F proposed a ban on baiting through the legislator. This bill made it to a vote on the floor and was badly beaten. *Some legislators even admitted during session vote of getting more emails opposed to this particular bill to ban baiting, than any other bill proposed that year.* After that defeat, the NDG&F has slowly been restricting baiting where a positive CWD case is found or even in neighboring units.

Unnecessary Hysteria: The reaction to CWD is similar to other unnecessary and heavy mandates by the government that we have seen in recent years, which have been fed by media frenzy and federal dollars. *Recent infection of EHD has killed 80-90% of deer in some units.* The reaction to this by the NDG&F when asked, is that it is naturally occurring and just needs to run its course. I ask if the concern is about the herd, then why is a total EHD die off like that, brushed aside and CWD remains center stage? When the herd is dead its dead, regardless of cause. CWD is also a naturally occurring phenomenon, so one would think the two issues would be treated equally.

Thank you for your consideration in supporting this bill for the sportsmen and women of North Dakota and the generations of youth that we need to recruit into hunting.