



# North Dakota Bowhunters Association

RE: North Dakota Bowhunters Association Opposition to HB 1151

Senator Patton and Committee members, I am Darrell Belisle, the Government and Conservation Director for the North Dakota Bowhunters Association. I am here on behalf of the NDBA's mission to Preserve, Promote, and Protect our Archery and Bowhunting Opportunities in North Dakota. The North Dakota Bowhunters Association has existed since 1953 and is, with members in every corner, the largest group of Archers and Bowhunters in the State. The NDBA takes an active role in working with our states Archery and Bowhunting opportunities.

## **Baiting**

The NDBA, currently does not take a position on baiting itself, we have members who do, and members who don't. However, the NDBA takes strong opposition to creating a law which takes away a tool used in combating a wildlife disease, such as the banning of baiting in CWD affected areas. *The NDBA believes this is a valuable practice used to effectively control the human component in the gathering of deer.* This legislation threatens to remove these Wildlife disease strategies and ultimately, should be left to those who are experts in the field of Wildlife Management and Disease. Thankfully, North Dakota has some of the best in the nation. The NDBA is greatly concerned about the long term health of our game resources.

## **Precedence**

As you know, a bill which concerns the manner of taking a deer creates quite a storm. Some of our outdoorsmen's vision narrows and these folks tend to lose sight of the long term effects of a bill like this. Making a law of this nature works against current wildlife management practices and opens the door for additional, unknown, restrictions in the future. Setting a precedence is something all North Dakota Sportsmen should always be concerned with. When the Game and Fish Departments activities are proven invaluable or no longer necessary, changes to wildlife management practices can be dictated in the Governor's hunting and fishing Proclamation. A good example is working with our handicapped people's opportunity to enjoy the outdoors, we believe the department can develop an effective, controlled program, with respect to CWD, and see to the required needs of the handicapped.

## **Constituents**

This bill, which concerns the management of a wildlife disease, should not be settled by a score of those in opposition versus those in favor. It is not a popularity vote or a contest. Passing HB 1151 is a solid threat to the future of our game resource. It certainly is not worth gambling on.

- Many of those in opposition are concerned about, one, making a law which takes a management tool out of the hands of our wildlife professionals, and two, the long term health of our Deer resource.
- Many of those in support of this bill, one, seem to believe CWD is not real, and is some sort of a conspiracy, and two, seem to only be concerned about the manner in which they choose to take their deer next season.

Please join the NDBA and those who are concerned for the long term health of our resource and recommend to your fellow Senators to oppose this HB 1151.

Thank you