



To: Honorable Members of the House Energy and Natural Resources
Committee
Re: House Bill 1236 – Use of Hunting Licenses and Permit Application Fees
Position: Oppose
Date: January 24, 2025

Honorable Members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee,

On behalf of the Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation (CSF), I respectfully ask that you oppose House Bill 1236 (HB 1236), a bill that would strip the North Dakota Game and Fish Department (GFD) of their ability to use funds from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses to create management plans for chronic wasting disease (CWD). In North Dakota, the GFD is the entity best suited to make science-based wildlife management decisions and should accordingly retain the ability to use funds from hunting and fishing licenses to create management plans for wildlife.

Founded in 1989, CSF is the informed authority across outdoor issues and serves as the primary conduit for influencing public policy. Working with the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus (CSC), the Governors Sportsmen's Caucus (GSC), and the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses (NASC), CSF gives a voice to hunters, anglers, recreational shooters, and trappers on Capitol Hill and throughout state capitals advocating on vital outdoor issues that are the backbone of our nation's conservation legacy.

CWD is a progressive, fatal, degenerative neurological disease that occurs in farmed and free-range deer, elk, caribou, and moose. CDW is a slow and progressive disease that has a long incubation period. Cervids infected with CWD may not present any visible signs of the disease for up to two years after they become infected and for state fish and wildlife agencies, like GFD, the primary objective is to prevent its spread into new areas. Retaining the ability of our fish and wildlife management experts to develop and execute wildlife management plans to stem the spread of CWD is therefore essential to preventing its introduction into new areas.

Additionally, the North Dakota Game and Fish Department is funded by the sale of hunting and fishing licenses, along with revenue generated from self-imposed excise taxes through the Pittman-Robertson Act and Dingell-Johnson Act with Wallop-Breaux Amendments. The American System of Conservation Funding (ASCF) serves as one of the primary sources of revenue for GFD’s fish and wildlife conservation efforts, including CWD management. Deer hunting makes up approximately 80% of our nation’s hunting economy, providing a significant economic impact. If CWD were to significantly spread to a point

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where hunters no longer pursue deer, it would have a devastating impact on conservation funding, and the economy.

CSF respectfully asks the honorable members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee to oppose the passage of House Bill 1236, thereby retaining the Game and Fish Department's authority to use the funds from hunting and fishing licenses to practice sound science-based wildlife management. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this issue. Should you require additional information on this, or other sportsmen's-related topics, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

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