

March 2, 2025

House ENR Committee:
RE: SB 2137- In support

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SB 2137 reads:

Hunting big game animals using supplemental feed, not prohibited or restricted (on private property with a 4 year sunset)

With the key word being **HUNTING**. This bill is returning, the people, their right to HUNT. SB 2137 is just that simple. The people are not being allowed to hunt around the feed that they are permitted to put down.

A bit of history behind this Bill is important to be aware of. In 2005, there were discussions in the ND Game and Fish Agency of banning the feeding of wildlife. 2009 Legislation brought a Bill that would do just that. A variety of North Dakotans came to the capitol to unite and speak up against this Bill. There were bird watchers, backyard enthusiasts, small parcel owners, sportsmen, and landowners of all sizes that were passionate about the feeding of the states wildlife. At the conclusion of the Bill's journey to failing, NDGF Director Terry Steinwand, commented that the Bill caused tremendous division with the people and the department, and that the department would never attempt this kind of restriction again.

The people can feed wildlife anywhere, any time and at any amount, no matter what restrictions have been imposed.

Here we are in 2025, and the restriction has turned towards hunting. There are 28 units that should be restricted in 2025. That is 28 areas that could receive citations for hunting around feed that they can legally place anytime of the year, any location, and at any amount.

The People are asking for the right to hunt to be returned. If you look back at the simply written Bill, it is about HUNTING, not feed. This bill is not about timing of feed. This bill is not about a distance of feed. This bill is not about an amount of feed. The 2009 People secured the topic of feed.

If you are concerned about an "outbreak" and authority, the NDGF has the overall authority, in an emergency, along with ND Board of Animal Health, and the Governor, to make changes as needed.

I invite you to vote a DO PASS on the existing bill that is in front of you. It is simple, concise, and what the people want. There are no additional amendments that would make sense so, let's keep it clean and lead it to the House floor on its merits.

Respectfully,

Dusty Backer