

I am a landowner and sportsman. I am writing this in opposition of 2025 SB2137. Even though I am a landowner I don't feel I have the right to do anything on my land that the Game and Fish feels is not good for the health of wildlife populations.

This bill will restrict the ability of the ND Game and Fish Department to do what science is telling them to do to slow the spread of CWD and other diseases through the ND deer population. I feel if this bill passes it will be bad for ND wildlife and set a bad precedent for future issues where a government department, like the ND Game and Fish, is paid by the ND residents to do a job based on scientific data. Only to not be able to do what science is telling them to do just because of, in this case, a group that cares more for their ability to easily kill a deer rather than truly caring for the health of the deer population.

This would be like the ND residents paying for all the senators and representatives to take their precious time to go to Bismarck, review all these bills every two years, give your opinion, but then we won't let them vote on the bills. This wouldn't allow them to make any changes for a better future and would be a waste of their time.

There is no argument that the concentration of any animal, including humans, will spread diseases faster. Eliminating baiting won't stop CWD but it will significantly slow it down. I have heard that an argument for this bill is that the Game and Fish isn't consistent on controlling baiting. Some units can bait, and others can't. That's not being inconsistent. They are restricting baiting only in units where there has been a documented case of CWD. That is why some units can and can't bait. That is being proactive and doing what makes sense on a step-by-step basis. They will also re-allow baiting again in a restricted unit if no documented cases of CWD are found again in that unit after several years.

Thanks for taking the time to read this. Please vote no on SB2137.

Joe Keler