

Jan. 10, 2025

Re: SB 2137

State Senators,

I respectfully ask you to vote “No” on SB 2137 which states “The department may not adopt a rule or implement a policy prohibiting or restricting the use of supplemental feed on private property for hunting a big game animal.”

Supporting reasons for a “No” vote include:

- **NDGFD staff, entrusted to steward our public wildlife resources, need the ability to use a breadth of wildlife management tools to manage wildlife populations and their health.** Restricting their ability to manage deer feeding, whether as supplemental feeding or as baiting, would prevent their use of a critical tool in decreasing artificial concentrations of deer and thus transmission of diseases such as Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) that is spread by contact between animals.
- **History has shown that without the ability to manage deer feeding, CWD, an always fatal disease in members of the deer family, will increase in prevalence in their populations.** Wisconsin allowed baiting of deer far too long exasperating the issue - 64 of their 72 counties are now considered “CWD-affected”. North Dakota would be wise to learn from their mistake and support what is needed to slow the spread of CWD, giving more time to learn how to potentially control it.
- **If artificial concentrations of deer are not discouraged, our state will pay the cost in multiple ways due to CWD’s greater/faster spread and prevalence:**
 - Increased financial cost to NDGFD due to more surveillance and management.
 - Increased NDGFD staff time on the issue, which will also divert them away from other important tasks such as habitat projects.
 - A decline in license sale funds that support NDGFD’s budget and work due to an increasingly unhealthy and declining deer herd that causes fewer licenses to be available and fewer hunters to be interested.
 - A decline in money spent by deer hunters in local communities because hunter numbers have declined.

Thank you for considering a “No” vote on SB 2137. Feel free to contact me if you have questions or need additional information.

Sincerely, Jodie Provost (landowner, hunter, biologist)