

Chairman Luick, Senate Ag Committee members

My name is Chris Jorde and I will be testifying in favor of SB 2137. I am a Farmer/Rancher, Sportsman, & Landowner. SB 2137 to me allows landowners and sportsman the ability to hunt over supplemental feed that is legal to be done year round on property that is privately owned. In a state that is more than 90 percent privately owned; it is obvious that the private landowners of North Dakota are a very large reason that the states deer herd even exists. I have yet to meet a steward of the land that does not want to see a reasonable balance of wildlife mixed in with their own operations no matter what type of land, farming and ranching practices, or crops raised. The states deer herd eats and survives on privately owned acres every day of the year and as most people know at certain times of the year food is abundantly available and others not. I own and operate my operation on prime wildlife habitat that is home to many different types of game and I offer feed to this wildlife year round. I have been practicing this since 2005 as a supplement to a large wintering herd of deer in their own natural habitat where the amount of food does not exist when they “yard up” to help them survive the harsh North Dakota winters that we often endure. It doesn’t make sense that we have the ability to feed wildlife for numerous reasons as landowners and sportsman across the state and are not able to harvest deer that we are not allowed to be hunted in so called “Restricted CWD areas.” As a rancher we know that for animals to survive and maximize genetic potential that they need to be supplemented at certain times throughout the year and that a healthy animal is less prone to diseases and stress; wildlife are no different! Feeding wildlife is a benefit to all wildlife across the state and all the sportsman that pursue them! It also helps keep herd numbers in check so that there will be more deer harvested and less of a depredation problem later in the season for farmers/ranchers feedstuffs.

I am not a biologist and don’t hold a wildlife degree, but I do hold a Farm/Ranch management degree that I utilize in everyday common sense situations. Diseases in animals and humans have and always will be here forever. What I don’t understand is why NDG&F thinks that CWD is so bad that they can’t even follow their own “science” and regulations to enforce their own policies. Having numerous units restricted for hunting over feed and then not enforcing it looks very bad for so called wildlife “experts” who think the spread of CWD is out of control; it is not!

The private landowners and sportsman of North Dakota deserve the ability and should not be restricted anywhere in the state to harvest wildlife that already exists because of the food they consume on any other day of the year except hunting season.

Please consider my testimony **IN FAVOR OF SB 2137**