

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 2137, commonly referred to as the "Baiting Bill." While this legislation may aim to enhance hunting opportunities, it poses a significant threat to our wildlife by undermining efforts to control Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD).

CWD, a fatal and highly contagious disease affecting deer, elk, and other cervids, spreads primarily through direct contact and environmental contamination. Baiting and feeding practices exacerbate this problem by artificially concentrating wildlife, facilitating the transmission of CWD through saliva, feces, urine, and contaminated soil. Scientific research and data consistently show that limiting baiting and feeding is essential for slowing the disease's spread.

SB 2137 threatens years of progress in CWD research and management by allowing practices that directly contradict evidence-based strategies. Wildlife agencies and researchers have worked tirelessly to study and mitigate this disease, and this bill undermines their efforts by creating conditions that accelerate its transmission. The long-term impacts of CWD include not only devastating declines in wildlife populations but also significant economic losses for communities that rely on healthy ecosystems and sustainable hunting industries.

By passing SB 2137, we risk compromising the health of our wildlife, diminishing hunting opportunities in the future, and increasing the financial burden on agencies and taxpayers tasked with managing this disease. Responsible wildlife management policies are crucial to protecting both our natural resources and the hunting heritage that many of us hold dear.

I urge you to oppose SB 2137 and prioritize science-based strategies to combat the spread of CWD. Protecting our wildlife and preserving the integrity of our ecosystems should remain a top priority for all legislators.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Tim Hoffer