

I am writing you in regards to SB 2137. I am opposed to this bill and offer the following reasons for this opposition. First as a long time hunter in North Dakota in excess of 55 years, I have always respected and relied on the North Dakota Game and Fish (G&F) to manage and protect our fish and wildlife resource. I believe they have the personnel and expertise to effectively manage our fish and wildlife and they have not proved me wrong in 65 years. To hamstring this agency by restricting them in their ability to regulate and control wildlife diseases is unconscionable and grossly misguided.

I will also speak to this proposed legislation as a landowner. I do not believe I own the wildlife on my land, and am a strong proponent of the North American Model of Wildlife Management which states that wildlife is held in trust for the people of the state of North Dakota. From a landowner prospective I am really sick of having bait piles surrounding my land, some within 50 yards of the boundary. I work hard to provide habitat by planting trees and shrubs as well as wildlife friendly crops. All this to see people with piles of bait surrounding my land to attract deer to their land that has been stripped of all its trees and wildlife habitat. This is annoyance but Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is more than an annoyance, it is reality. The G&F only restricts baiting in areas with CWD or adjacent units. North Dakota currently has low prevalence of this disease and the reason for this the the proactive approach G&F has taken to control this disease.

I am asking you to please consider opposing SB 2137 and keep the Game and Fish Department in charge of all aspects of wildlife management. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed legislation.