

As a wild game chef who makes his living developing recipes using the wildlife of North Dakota, I strongly oppose Senate Bill 2137.

SB 2137 threatens the ND Game & Fish Department's ability to manage our wildlife resources effectively by restricting their authority to regulate baiting practices, a critical part of their Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Management Plan.

My opposition is grounded in the belief that wildlife management should be driven by the expertise of our wildlife biologists, not by legislation that undermines their ability to carry out their responsibilities. The North Dakota Game and Fish Department is tasked with managing wildlife for the benefit of all North Dakotans, both present and future, as enshrined in the North Dakota Constitution. Article XI, Section 27, ensures that hunting, fishing, and trapping are valued aspects of our heritage and are managed by law and regulation for the public good. This constitutional mandate underscores the importance of making decisions based on science and the best interests of our wildlife, not short-term political pressures.

Allowing baiting practices, especially in areas affected by CWD, directly contradicts the principles of responsible wildlife management. While I respect some hunters' traditions of hunting over a bait pile, the science is clear: baiting contributes to the spread of CWD. This bill is not in the best interest of our deer population or the hunters like me who rely on them. It also undermines the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's ability to fulfill its legal obligations and protect wildlife resources for all North Dakotans.

I strongly oppose Senate Bill 2137. I urge legislators to vote NO on this bill and allow our North Dakota wildlife biologists to continue their important work in managing our state's wildlife resources.

Sincerely,

Jeff Benda  
Fargo, ND  
[www.wildgameandfish.com](http://www.wildgameandfish.com)