

House Bill 1151

I am writing in opposition to House Bill 1151. As amended, this bill is essentially the same as the original version and is not allowing the North Dakota Game and Fish Department(NDGF) to carry out their duties. Setting the precedence of managing wildlife via legislation is a dangerous route to go regardless of how anyone feels about Chronic Wasting Disease(CWD). All one needs to do is look at states like Colorado, Washington, California, Florida, etc where wildlife management has been hamstrung by metropolitan areas. It is conceivable that Fargo, West Fargo, and Grand Forks residents could voice strong opposition to existing policy and begin to influence policy. We need to let the wildlife professionals manage wildlife, just as we leave the tax professionals to deal with taxation and fiscal issues.

Baiting unnaturally congregates deer and exposes deer that may not have otherwise come into contact with an infectious deer. If we want to avoid unnatural congregation of deer, we need to discuss wildlife habitat. Of course natural herding of deer during severe winters is unavoidable, but it may be minimized by increasing wildlife habitat.

Those who says this bill is about protecting youth hunting and hunting heritage is being deceptive to you and themselves. If those in support of this bill truly cared about protecting the strong hunting heritage in North Dakota, they would not support this bill and limit NDGF's management of a fatal disease. Left unmanaged, CWD has the likelihood to have population-level impacts in our lifetime.

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