



January 26, 2021

Representative Rick Hansen, Chair
House Environment and Natural Resources Policy and Finance Committee
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Hansen and Committee Members:

I appreciate the opportunity to present these brief comments on behalf of the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association (MDHA) to this committee meeting.

I am writing today on behalf of the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association (MDHA) to express our strong support for House File 219 in its entirety.

While the bill contains many important provisions, MDHA would like to highlight its support of several specific measures. First, MDHA strongly supports the sections of the bill that would strengthen the regulation of farm cervidae operations as well as those that treat the interstate movement of farmed cervidae carcasses the same as hunter harvested deer. MDHA also supports the provision that would allow licensed hunters to kill escaped farm cervidae without liability to the owner. These measures would help to protect Minnesota's wild deer herd, which is so important to our citizens both socially and economically.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) continues to pose a grave threat to Minnesota's deer and deer hunting tradition, as well as the nearly \$1.0 billion economic impact that deer hunting contributes to Minnesota. We appreciate the actions the Legislature has previously taken to strengthen regulations on captive cervidae farms. Among the positive measures enacted are the requirement of redundant gates on farms and the mandatory depopulation of all cervidae on farms with a CWD-positive test. While these are positive steps, more changes are necessary.

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MDHA also provides its continued support of the provision of the bill that would make permanent the law that allows for the use of portable stands overnight in WMAs in certain areas of Northwest Minnesota.

MDHA appreciates the opportunity to present this testimony to the committee and looks forward to working with the Legislature in the future as it addresses these important issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lloyd H. ...", is written in a cursive style.

MDHA Executive Director