



MINNESOTA DEER HUNTERS ASSOCIATION

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BUILDING OUR HUNTING & CONSERVATION LEGACY THROUGH HABITAT, EDUCATION & ADVOCACY.

March 15, 2022

Rep. Mike Sundin
Chair
Minnesota House Agriculture Finance and Policy Committee
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Written Testimony for Committee Hearing on March 16, 2022 in Support of HF 3684 and other Farmed Cervid Measures

Dear Chair Sundin:

I am writing today on behalf of the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association (MDHA) to submit testimony in support of HF 3684 and to set forth MDHA's position on several related matters. MDHA has been actively working to protect Minnesota's wild deer herd since its founding in 1980 and recently re-affirmed its position on a number of farmed cervid policy issues at its annual meeting on February 26, 2022. I submit this testimony to set forth the positions that MDHA adopted at its annual meeting.

Moratorium on New Cervid Farm Registrations

MDHA supports legislation stating that the Board of Animal Health must not approve any new registrations for farmed cervids. MDHA would not oppose a person holding a valid registration from selling or transferring the person's herd and registration to a family member.

Voluntary Buyout of Registered Operations

MDHA supports appropriating funds from the general fund to offer a buyout payment to the owners of farmed cervids registered under Minnesota Statutes, section 35.155. The State of Minnesota must establish buyout payment amounts and criteria. Under no circumstances does MDHA support the use of deer license revenues or Game and Fish funds for this voluntary buyout.

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Antemortem Testing of Farmed Cervids

MDHA supports a requirement that all farmed cervids in Minnesota be tested annually for chronic wasting disease (CWD) once an antemortem test is approved by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). If a farmed cervid tests positive for CWD, a second antemortem test shall be performed. If the second test is positive, the owner must have the animal destroyed and tested for CWD using a postmortem test approved by the Board of Animal Health. If the postmortem test is positive, the owner must depopulate the cervids on the premises as required by Minnesota law.

Importation Ban

MDHA supports a requirement that a person must not import cervids from any herd originating from a state or province where CWD has been detected in either farmed or wild cervids. For states and provinces where CWD has not been detected, if there is an antemortem test for CWD validated by USDA, a person may only import cervids that have tested negative immediately prior to importation.

MDHA appreciates having the opportunity to comment and looks forward to continuing to participate in this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Craig L. Engwall".

Craig L. Engwall
MDHA Executive Director