



QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Date: 22 February 2016
To: House Committee on Natural Resources
From: Kip Adams, Director of Education and Outreach
Michael Goyne, State Advisory Council President
Re: House Bill 5146

On behalf of the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA) we are writing to support House Bill 5146 which would increase the penalties for possessing the carcass of a deer or elk killed in a state listed as a state containing chronic wasting disease (CWD). The QDMA is a national nonprofit wildlife conservation organization dedicated to ensuring the future of white-tailed deer, wildlife habitat and our hunting heritage. The QDMA has over 60,000 members nationwide, and our membership includes hunters, landowners and natural resource professionals.

Chronic Wasting Disease is an always fatal disease found in most deer species, including elk, moose, mule and white-tailed deer, and CWD has now been identified in 23 U.S. states, 2 Canadian provinces and Korea (from an elk imported from Canada in 1997). Contagions spread through urine, feces, saliva, blood, deer parts, and especially via live deer. Importantly, there is no vaccine or cure. New research shows plants uptake prions from infected soil, and hamsters that ate the plants contracted the disease. In addition, recent research provides evidence of some infection in humanized mice. These results do not cast a favorable light for CWD, deer, and American agriculture.

CWD is also very, very expensive. For example, according to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) Texas had been testing about 2,500 deer per year for a cost of \$75,000. However, once CWD was confirmed in 2 captive white-tailed deer herds TPWD had to test 7,000 deer in 2015 for a cost to sportsmen and women of \$210,000! That money could have been far better spent on habitat acquisition and management, hunter access, and other hunter related items.

The prions that cause CWD are present in numerous body parts of infected animals including the brain, spine, and eyes. Therefore, numerous states -including Michigan - do not allow these parts to be brought into the state from other states/provinces with CWD. Unfortunately, many hunters do bring these illegal parts home, and House Bill 5146 can help reduce this occurrence and better safeguard our free-ranging deer population. For the reasons stated above, the QDMA urges you to support House Bill 5146. Thank you for your time and your commitment to Michigan's natural resources.

Respectfully,

Kip Adams

Kip Adams
Director of Education and Outreach

Michael Goyne

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State Advisory Council President