



QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Date: 18 April 2018
To: Agriculture Committee
From: Kip Adams, Director of Conservation
Re: House Bill 5771

On behalf of the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA) I am writing to state our support for House Bill 5771 which would make it illegal for anyone to import live cervids into Michigan. 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.

Nearly every deer hunter has heard of chronic wasting disease (CWD), and unfortunately more are being directly impacted by it each year. 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 25 U.S. states, three Canadian provinces, Korea (from an elk imported from Canada in 1997), Finland and Norway. Contagions spread through urine, feces, saliva, blood, deer parts, and especially via live deer. Importantly, there is no vaccine or cure.

Most states require five years of disease monitoring for interstate commerce, but some CWD-positive deer live longer than five years without showing any signs of having the disease. Thus, unfortunately regulations currently allow movement of animals that could unknowingly be CWD-positive. Additionally, the CDC reported that CWD testing among states varies considerably in scope from mandatory testing of all dead animals to voluntary herd certification programs or mandatory testing of only animals suspected of dying of CWD. House Bill 5771 would make it illegal for anyone to import live cervids, including deer, into Michigan and help protect the state's free-ranging deer resource and multi-billion-dollar hunting industry.

Currently, to prevent the spread of CWD, hunters are not permitted to bring high-risk parts of carcasses from deer they harvest in other states back to Michigan, so not permitting importation of live deer closes a major loophole in the state's disease prevention program. We urge you to support this important legislation and thank you for your commitment to Michigan's natural resources.

Respectfully,

Kip Adams
Director of Conservation