

Committee: Big Game, Turkey, and Furbearers Committee, and CWD Committee

Author: Steve Jones, on behalf of CFM Affiliate "Missouri Hunters for Fair Chase"

Support Initiative Petition to Protect Missouri Deer from Chronic Wasting Disease

WHEREAS, the facts listed below make clear it is impossible to engage in the confinement of or commercial movement of live cervids without risking new outbreaks of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in wild, free-ranging deer

- USDA CWD Herd Certification has not succeeded in keeping CWD out of Certified Herds.
- Many cervids escape from confinement, about 1/3rd of which are never recovered
- CWD takes an average of 18 months before infected animals show visible symptoms
- Infected animals shed CWD prions in their saliva and waste long before symptoms appear
- CWD prions bind to the soil and remain infectious for many years
- There is no practical and effective live test for CWD;
- The transport of privately owned cervids as needed to support the confined cervid industry appear closely related to many new outbreaks of CWD, such as the one in Missouri; and

WHEREAS, Missouri currently has 40 permitted "Big Game Hunting Preserves" and over 200 breeding facilities permitted to supply them; and

WHEREAS, the confined cervid industry has successfully sued to avoid regulations necessary to protect the public resource, and has abandoned any effort to cooperate with the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) or the Conservation Commission, and has successfully engaged the support of the Missouri Legislature to seek even less regulation intended to protect the future of Missouri wildlife; and

WHEREAS, to fulfill its obligation to protect the public interest in healthy free ranging wildlife the Missouri Conservation Commission needs primary regulatory authority over all big-game in Missouri whether confined or free-ranging; and

WHEREAS, Missouri taxpayers will spend over \$2 Million this fiscal year on CWD management, in addition to \$750,000 on legal bills for just the initial deer breeder lawsuit, with more expenses coming in the appeals process; and

WHEREAS, multiple initiative petitions have been filed seeking to end this threat to the public wildlife resource via the judgement of Missouri voters in November 2018, containing various combination of these elements, one of which will be selected to gather signatures to qualify for the ballot:

- **Import/Transport Ban:** prohibit the importation of live privately owned big game. Also prohibits in State shipment and export, but with “grandfather” clause and sunset provision.
- **Fair Chase:** prohibit killing confined big game for profit, with “grandfather” clause and sunset provision.
- **Authority:** specify that the Missouri Conservation Commission is the primary regulatory authority over privately owned big game.
- **Records** related to programs tracking diseases of big game shall be open and available to the public.
- **Right to Hunt:** Language specifying the right to hunt within MDC Regulations; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the Conservation Federation of Missouri assembled at the Capitol Plaza Hotel, Jefferson City, MO, this 12th day of March, 2017 does hereby support initiative petitions filed by Hunters for Fair Chase, for consideration by Missouri voters on November 6, 2018.