



THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

Leaders in Wildlife Science, Management and Conservation

DATE: 5 February 2019

TO: The Honorable John Barrasso; The Honorable Michael Bennet; The Honorable Doug Jones

FROM: Darren A. Miller, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
President, The Wildlife Society

RE: TWS Strongly Supports Reintroduction of Chronic Wasting Disease Transmission in Cervidae Study Act

“This legislation will provide wildlife managers, working in partnership with constituencies, tools needed to manage, minimize, or prevent the spread of this disease that has proven damaging to wild cervid populations, hunters, outdoor enthusiasts, and the outdoor recreation economy. We thank Senator Barrasso, Senator Bennet, and Senator Jones for their legislative efforts to better understand this devastating disease” – President Darren Miller

Dear Senator,

The Wildlife Society strongly supports the *Chronic Wasting Disease Transmission in Cervidae Study Act*. We appreciate your recognition of the urgent need to address this ongoing wildlife health crisis.

The Wildlife Society (TWS; wildlife.org) serves to inspire, empower, and enable wildlife professionals to sustain wildlife populations and their habitat through science-based management and conservation. Founded in 1937, TWS and our network of affiliated chapters and sections represents more than 15,000 professional wildlife biologists, managers, and educators dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship. As leaders in wildlife science, management, and conservation, TWS actively promotes using science in all aspects of policy and decision making.

A fatal degenerative neurological disease first identified in captive mule deer in Colorado in the late 1960s, Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is now present in at least 26 states and two Canadian provinces. Caused by abnormally shaped protein particles called prions shed in feces, urine, or saliva, or through infected tissue, CWD is always fatal. Over the last 40 years, it has spread through both captive and free-ranging populations of cervids (deer and elk) and has become a serious concern for wildlife biologists, managers, and those that enjoy and sustainably use our irreplaceable wildlife resources.

The *Chronic Wasting Disease Transmission in Cervidae Study Act* would provide wildlife professionals with much-needed information on CWD and its spread, enabling them to conduct more targeted research, determine which areas of the country are most at risk, and work with hunters and others to help prevent further spread.

Thank you for recognizing the threat that CWD poses and introducing the *Chronic Wasting Disease Transmission in Cervidae Study Act*. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues to ensure the bill's passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darren Miller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D'.

Darren A. Miller, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
President, The Wildlife Society