

**Montana Wildlife Federation ♦ National Wildlife Federation
Wildlife Management Institute ♦ Mule Deer Foundation ♦ Montana Bowhunters Association
Montana Backcountry Hunters and Anglers ♦ Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Traditional Bowhunters of Montana**

January 9, 2017

The Honorable Sen. Jon Tester
311 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-2604

Dear Sen. Tester,

As organizations that represent tens of thousands of Montana hunters, we are writing to express a sincere thank you for introducing the Chronic Wasting Disease Support for States Act (S. 2252). Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is one of the most serious of all the threats to our big game herds, including deer, elk and moose. As you know, this neurological disease renders animals eventually helpless as they lose cognitive ability. It is always fatal, and it's extremely difficult to kill, because CWD is spread through a protein prion that can survive incredibly harsh conditions.

There are models of states that have been able to successfully manage CWD. New York effectively wiped it out with aggressive early intervention. And Minnesota and Illinois have been able to keep its prevalence very low through management actions. In all cases, management was specialized to address the complex issues surrounding this disease.

Like any government action, response to CWD requires adequate funding. That's where we are so appreciative of the measure you introduced. State agencies have the expertise, but they need the resources to conduct special hunts, test animals and take other needed management actions. The seriousness of the threat of CWD means that everyone has an interest in working to minimize its effects. We are hunters, but we also recognize that everyone values wildlife. Federal funding to help combat it is justified.

Your work on this shows your commitment to our public wildlife, and to hunters and wildlife enthusiasts. Now we need to work together to get the bill passed. You have our full commitment to work hard to educate other lawmakers of the vital importance of this bill to our public wildlife, our recreational outdoors economy and our sporting traditions.

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Sincerely,

Dave Chadwick
Executive Director
Montana Wildlife Federation

Marlon Clapham
President
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