



# MINNESOTA ELK BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

May 11, 2022

Chair Bill Ingebrigtsen  
Senate Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee  
95 University Avenue W. Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3207  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Rick Hansen  
House Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee  
407 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Ingebrigtsen, Chair Hansen, and members of the Conference Committee,

The Minnesota Elk Breeders Association represents elk farmers from across Minnesota who are working to secure the traditions of farm and family which are so important to our state, local economies and communities. We appreciate your leadership and the work of all members of the Conference Committee and ask you to consider our comments below.

The Minnesota Elk Breeders Association **opposes** provisions relating to farmed cervidae from Article 3 of the House version of S.F. 4062. Most notably, some of the provisions we have concerns with include:

- Transfer of all responsibilities for farmed cervidae oversight to the DNR. The Board of Animal Health is the appropriate agency to oversee farmed livestock; DNR is in the business of conservation and recreation and is not equipped to deal with animal livestock.
- Requiring all farmed cervidae facilities to prevent physical contact between farmed and wild cervids. This has not been shown to be effective. In addition, no state in the country requires such a mandate.
- Prohibiting the importation of live cervids and semen from a state or province where CWD is present in either wild or farmed cervids. The transfer of semen has never been documented to spread CWD and would essentially eliminate the ability for producers to utilize artificial insemination as a means to accelerate CWD-resistant genetics into their herd.
- Providing public access to the location of all cervid farms in Minnesota. Allowing public access to this personal data does nothing to curb the incidence of CWD and unnecessarily puts farmed cervid owners at risk of attack by extremists.

CWD is endemic in Minnesota and CWD will continue to spread with or without cervid farms. Forcing farmed cervid owners out of business by excessive, unproven mandates and doing nothing to private property owners who experience CWD on their personal property does not add up. Ways to improve management of CWD, such as testing protocols, are on the horizon and we look forward to the day when those technologies can be validated by science and implemented.

Sincerely,

Mark Luedtke, President