

May 11, 2022

Re: HF 4366 Omnibus Agriculture, Housing and Broadband Conference Committee.

Opposition to Article 2, Section 27, subdivision 10, Part c of the House version

Chairs Westrom and Sundin and conference Committee members,

The Minnesota Deer Farmers Association is opposed to the previously cited provisions in the House version of HF 4366. As rational for this opposition, please consider the following:

The first provision would prohibit the registration of any new deer farms. The second provision would bring about a slow death for the entire deer farming industry by allowing for a one time sale or transfer of an existing farm to a family member. These provisions would be incredibly destructive to the many small family farms that are in the business of raising whitetail deer.

1. New farms are the lifeblood of the industry. Without new farms, existing farms would lose a primary customer for stock, breeding stock, semen, expertise, equipment, fencing, feed and general infrastructure.
2. The proposal to allow for a one time sale or transfer of a deer farm to a family member is also problematic. This is nothing more than a slow death of the deer farming industry. If this provision was to pass, the effect would be amplified as existing farms are forced out of business over time. This snowball effect would feed on itself as the diminishing number of remaining farms would have fewer and fewer customers with which to conduct business.

These provisions would spell the end of the deer farming industry in Minnesota. The Minnesota Deer Farmers Association opposes them in their entirety. If the desired effect is to somehow stop the spread of CWD, the results will be disappointing. As CWD continues to spread in the wild deer population, driving deer farmers out of business will do nothing to stop this progression. In the process, many small family farms would be forced out of business.

Sincerely,
Scott Fier
President Minnesota Deer Farmers Association