



# STATE OF MINNESOTA

## Office of Governor Tim Walz

75 Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. ♦ Suite 130 ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155-1611

June 8, 2021

Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen  
Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee Chair  
3207 Minnesota Senate Building  
95 University Avenue West  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Carrie Ruud  
Environment and Natural Resources Policy and Legacy Finance Committee Chair  
3233 Minnesota Senate Building  
95 University Avenue West  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Torrey Westrom  
Agriculture and Rural Development Finance and Policy Committee Chair  
3201 Minnesota Senate Building  
95 University Avenue West  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Rick Hansen, Chair  
Chair of Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee  
407 State Office Building  
100 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Mike Sundin  
Agriculture Finance and Policy Committee Chair  
417 State Office Building  
100 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Senate and House Chairs:

I know we all agree that our state's wild white-tailed deer herd is a cherished and culturally vital resource to Minnesotans and the Tribal Nations in our state. As such, we want Minnesotans to enjoy the benefits of a thriving and disease-free deer population by eliminating Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in wild deer, minimizing the risk of new disease introductions and enhancing habitat quality across the state.

Over the past several years, the administration and legislature have worked together to improve the management of white-tailed deer farms and reduce the risk of spread of CWD. Unfortunately, current circumstances require a change in course, as demonstrated by the recent discovery of a CWD-positive deer farm in Beltrami County, which includes a carcass disposal site on adjacent county-managed land. It's clear that we need a new strategy to address the problem of CWD in farmed white-tailed deer.

As leaders of the Executive and Legislative branches of government, we need to unite at this pivotal moment to protect Minnesota's wild white-tailed deer and our deer hunting traditions. As you are working with my commissioners to come to agreement on the Environment and Natural Resources Omnibus bill, I want to communicate my support for the administration and legislature to once again work together to accomplish and fund the transfer of oversight of farmed white-tailed deer from the Board of Animal Health (BAH) to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). This change allows BAH to focus more directly on its mission, while the DNR can apply a different set of tools and expertise to the management and containment of CWD in both wild and farmed white-tailed deer.

Commissioner Strommen and other members of my leadership team are ready to work jointly with you to ensure wild white-tailed deer continue to thrive in Minnesota for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. J. Walz", written in a cursive style.

Tim Walz  
Governor

cc: Commissioner Sarah Strommen, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
Commissioner Thom Petersen, Minnesota Department of Agriculture