

News from Congressman Ron Kind

REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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Key Sportsman Groups Endorse Rep. Kind's Bipartisan Bill to Manage and Prevent the Spread of Chronic Wasting Disease *Comes as Wisconsin Hunters Partake in Deer Gun Season*

La Crosse, WI – Today, key sportsman groups endorsed Rep. Kind's bipartisan Chronic Wasting Disease Management Act. The bill will support state and tribal efforts to develop and implement management strategies as well as support research regarding the causes of chronic wasting disease and methods to control the further spread of the disease. CWD positive deer have been found in or within 10 miles of Grant, Vernon, Crawford, Richland, Monroe, Juneau, Adams, Portage, and Wood counties.

Below are comments from groups who have endorsed the bill:

Wisconsin Wildlife Federation

*"The funding and help with research outlined in Reps. Kind and Sensenbrenner's legislation would give the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources the kind of support it needs as it grapples with the spread of chronic wasting disease in the state," said **George Meyer, executive director of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation**. "Wisconsin's deer herds are critically important to the state's more than 600,000 gun hunters and 225,000 bow hunters. They represent an estimated \$1 billion in annual economic benefits for the state."*

Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation

*"The Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF) has long recognized that increased attention to, and funding for, regular screening and testing of cervids at the state level is necessary to ensure a timely response is possible in the event of a Chronic Wasting Disease outbreak," said **Brent Miller CSF's Senior Director, Northeastern States**. "We commend the leadership of Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus member, Congressman Kind, and Congressman Sensenbrenner on this critical wildlife management issue."*

National Wildlife Federation

“Chronic Wasting Disease poses a grave threat to North America’s deer, elk, and moose herds, and the hunters and communities that depend on them,” said Collin O’Mara, President and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation. “Yet as this terrible disease spreads rapidly across our country, it’s received neither the urgent attention nor sufficient resources from Washington to combat it. That is about to change thanks to the leadership of two great sportsmen, Representatives Ron Kind and Jim Sensenbrenner, who understand how serious this threat and why immediate action is needed. The National Wildlife Federation enthusiastically supports their bill to provide states and tribes the support required to respond to this critical threat to America’s wildlife.”

Chronic Wasting Disease Alliance

“In the last decade, while CWD has relentlessly spread to new areas and increased in prevalence, the funding and resources to fight it have dwindled,” said Matt Dunfee, Program Coordinator for the CWD Alliance. “Given that CWD may pose the greatest risk to the sustainability of North America’s deer, elk, and moose populations, it is beyond vital that we ramp up the funding and resources needed to manage this disease. This proposed legislation goes a long way in getting the wildlife management community the tools they need to fight CWD at a level appropriate to the severity of the disease.”

National Deer Alliance

“At the North American Deer Summit, held earlier this year in Austin, TX, the states represented made it clear that more funding was needed for CWD monitoring and research. We are glad that our coalition of conservation groups was able to work with Congressman Kind and Congressman Sensenbrenner to craft this important legislation,” said the National Deer Alliance.

Quality Deer Management Association

“The importance of healthy white-tailed deer populations to the future of wildlife conservation and our hunting heritage cannot be overemphasized,” said QDMA CEO Brian Murphy. “Expenditures by whitetail hunters account for nearly half of the entire U.S. hunting economy which employs nearly 500,000 Americans, contributes tens of billions to our economy, and funds significant portions of state wildlife agency budgets for both game and nongame species.”

Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies

“Chronic wasting disease is a fatal neurological disease that affects members of the deer family, and may be one of the biggest challenges in modern wildlife conservation history,” stated Virgil

Moore, President of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and Director of Idaho Fish and Game. *“This legislative package, if passed, will move forward and strengthen state and tribal chronic wasting disease management strategies by providing critical funding to help protect our nation’s wildlife.”*

With 88% of Wisconsin’s 763,384 hunters participating in deer hunting and an economic impact of \$2.5 billion, it is critical that action is taken to prevent the spread of chronic wasting disease.

The bill is co-sponsored by Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI). It has three main components.

- Authorizing funding to state and tribal agencies responsible for wildlife management to implement management strategies to address CWD.
- Directing USDA to make grants to expand and accelerate applied research on CWD.
- Directing USDA and the Department of Interior to work cooperatively with the states to conduct research and implement state CWD response plans to reduce the spread and prevalence of the disease.