

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 15

Senators McBroom and Bumstead offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to urge the Natural Resources Commission to
2 authorize, and the Department of Natural Resources to organize,
3 wolf hunting and trapping as part of the state's wolf management
4 efforts beginning in 2021.

5 Whereas, Gray wolves in Michigan have been protected under the
6 federal Endangered Species Act since 1974. At that time, gray
7 wolves were in danger of going extinct and needed the special
8 protection provided by the act to aid their recovery; and

9 Whereas, The federal government removed the gray wolf from the
10 federal Endangered Species list effective January 4, 2021. Gray
11 wolves have made a remarkable recovery from near extinction.
12 Michigan's current gray wolf population of almost 700 wolves
13 exceeds by over three times the number of wolves biologists

1 consider necessary to maintain a healthy population in the state.
2 Michigan's wolf population has met all federal recovery goals for
3 delisting both in terms of number of wolves and the stability of
4 those numbers for many years; and

5 Whereas, The state of Michigan is now responsible for managing
6 its gray wolf population, and Department of Natural Resources
7 officials stated as recently as the summer of 2020 that their
8 survey results show that Michigan's wolf population has recovered.
9 Wolves in Michigan achieved the minimum sustainable population goal
10 of 200 wolves for five consecutive years in 2004 and have since
11 surpassed state and federal population recovery goals for nearly 20
12 years; and

13 Whereas, A managed wolf hunt in the state is a viable means of
14 ensuring stable wolf population numbers. Wolf hunting allows the
15 wolf population to be kept at levels that ensure the overall
16 survival of the animal but limit potential wolf and human
17 conflicts; and

18 Whereas, Michigan has an active and legitimate wolf management
19 plan in place that was updated in 2015. While we commend the
20 department for beginning the process of updating this plan again
21 and commend the Natural Resources Commission for setting a plan
22 update deadline of the end of 2021, there is no statutory
23 requirement or precedent to delay a 2021 wolf hunt while the plan
24 is reviewed and updated. Neither is there a requirement for a
25 statewide public attitude survey or study to occur prior to a
26 hunting season; and

27 Whereas, The law is clear that the commission should, to the
28 greatest extent practicable, utilize principles of sound scientific
29 management in making decisions regarding the taking of game; now,

1 therefore, be it

2 Resolved by the Senate, That we urge the Natural Resources
3 Commission to authorize, and the Department of Natural Resources to
4 organize, wolf hunting and trapping as part of the state's wolf
5 management efforts beginning in 2021; and be it further

6 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the
7 members of the Natural Resources Commission and the Director of the
8 Department of Natural Resources.