

Senators Barcia, Kahn, Gleason and Prusi offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 221.

A resolution to urge the Director of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resources Commission to lift the ban on deer baiting in the Lower Peninsula and to take certain actions to protect the health of the state's deer herd.

Whereas, The state of Michigan adopted the Michigan Surveillance and Response Plan for Chronic Wasting Disease in 2002. The plan calls for an immediate ban on baiting and supplemental feeding of cervids in a peninsula of this state in which chronic wasting disease (CWD) is found; and

Whereas, In August 2008, chronic wasting disease was confirmed in a three-year old privately owned white tail deer at a captive cervid ranch in Kent County. Pursuant to the Michigan Surveillance and Response Plan for Chronic Wasting Disease, the Director of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources immediately issued an interim order banning the baiting and feeding of deer in Michigan's Lower Peninsula; and

Whereas, It is now known that all of the other deer at the Kent County ranch have tested negative for chronic wasting disease. The epidemiology investigation of the infected deer has not shown the presence of chronic wasting disease at related captive cervid operations, and chronic wasting disease has not been shown to be present in Michigan's free ranging deer population; and

Whereas, Broad baiting bans have not been shown to be an effective means to control chronic wasting disease, leading states such as Wisconsin to not implement broad baiting bans to stop the spread of the disease; and

Whereas, A broad ban on baiting in Michigan's Lower Peninsula is anticipated to result in lowered participation in the 2008 archery and firearms deer seasons, resulting in a decreased rate of harvest; and

Whereas, Many of the deer management units in Michigan, particularly in the southern Lower Peninsula, are already over-populated; and

Whereas, A decreased rate of harvest would result in greater deer density in the wild deer population and an increased rate of motorized vehicle collisions with deer with the potential for the loss of human life; and

Whereas, A ban on baiting throughout the entire Lower Peninsula for 2008 would result in millions of dollars of economic cost to farmers and retailers and would result in a wide ranging loss of employment and the ruin of some small markets, stores, and farms; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we urge the Director of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to lift the ban on the baiting of deer in Michigan's entire Lower Peninsula without delay and to apply a ban on the baiting of deer to the Kent County CWD surveillance zone, those areas in close proximity to the zone as is deemed reasonable to control the spread of chronic wasting disease in central west Michigan, and those areas in which baiting is currently banned as part of the effort to control the spread of bovine tuberculosis; and be it further

Resolved, That we request the Michigan Natural Resources Commission to conduct public hearings on the baiting of deer and elk in Michigan and to use sound scientific management to issue rules regarding baiting, taking into account the management, economic, and social impact of baiting and its effects on the health of the state's deer herd; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor of Michigan, the Director of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and the Michigan Natural Resources Commission.