



Media Release

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Rep. Shankland, Rep. Considine, and Sen. Smith Introduce “Healthy Herd, Healthy Hunt” Legislative Package

MADISON—Today, Rep. Katrina Shankland (D-Stevens Point), Rep. Dave Considine (D-Baraboo), and Sen. Jeff Smith (D-Brunswick) introduced the “*Healthy Herd, Healthy Hunt*” legislative package to help reduce the impact of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) on Wisconsin’s deer population. CWD is a contagious neurological disease caused by an abnormal protein called a prion. The disease is 100% fatal, affecting deer, elk, and moose, causing extreme weight loss, erratic behavior, and loss of bodily functions. CWD prions are highly resilient and can remain in the soil for an extended period of time, demonstrating the importance of mitigating the spread of CWD.

The “*Healthy Herd, Healthy Hunt*” legislative package includes three bills focusing on CWD research, testing, and proper disposal of deer carcasses to prevent the spread of CWD. Following a press conference introducing the legislative package, Rep. Shankland, Rep. Considine, and Sen. Smith issued the following statements:

“With gun deer hunting season underway, the continued spread of Chronic Wasting Disease is a serious threat to Wisconsin’s deer population, our billion dollar hunting industry, and our proud sporting heritage. That’s why I’m pleased to introduce this legislative package today that takes a comprehensive approach to addressing CWD in Wisconsin. Our bills will support the DNR’s work to research, test, and prevent the spread of CWD among our state’s deer population. These bills will also support hunters and sporting groups by providing funding for additional CWD testing kiosks and safe deer carcass disposal sites, making it easier to test your deer for CWD and dispose of it properly after harvest,” **said Rep. Katrina Shankland.**

Rep. Dave Considine added, “Chronic Wasting Disease used to be a problem primarily in my area of southern Wisconsin, but that’s changing rapidly. CWD in wild deer populations will spread faster, kill more deer, and threaten our ability to preserve Wisconsin’s deer hunting legacy. I just harvested deer on my farm with my family, and we sent them in for testing right away. The Legislature needs to be doing everything possible to make it easy to test for CWD and properly dispose of your deer carcass.”

Sen. Smith stated, “It’s vital that we stay on top of the spread of CWD, or numbers could skyrocket. Successful management of the CWD epidemic depends on research, testing, and disposal. Our legislation provides the DNR with funding to accomplish these objectives, giving direction to our state’s response to this widespread health hazard.”

The “*Healthy Herd, Healthy Hunt*” is endorsed by the [Wisconsin Wildlife Federation](#) and [Wisconsin’s Green Fire](#).

See below for a summary of the legislation included in the “Healthy Herd, Healthy Hunt” labor package.

1. **LRB-0908:** Providing \$2,000,000 in the 2023-2025 fiscal biennium to the Department of Natural Resources to expand CWD research, testing, and management efforts.
2. **LRB-0909:** Codifies the Department of Natural Resources’ self-service CWD testing kiosks program and provides the DNR with \$200,000 in the 2023-2025 fiscal biennium to support the program.
3. **LRB-0910:** Provides the Department of Natural Resources with \$2,000,000 in the 2023-2025 fiscal biennium to provide safe, deer carcass disposal sites throughout the state. The bill also provides \$100,000 to the DNR for hunter education related to proper deer carcass disposal.

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