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Committee Members

PLEASE REMEMBER THESE THINGS WHEN CONSIDERING THIS ABUSIVE PROPOSED LAW AGAINST OUR PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS.

- 1) THIS LAW WOULD TAKE AWAY 15 FEET OF OUR PERIMETER SIZE WITH NO LAND PAYMENT OR PRODUCTION LOSS CONSIDERED BY YOU.
- 2) MOST OF OUR LIVESTOCK ESCAPE BY HUMAN ERROR OUT OUR OPEN GATES, NOT FROM FENCE FAILURE. ENFORCE THE LAWS THAT EXIST DON'T MAKE MORE.
- 3) IN OUR INDUSTRIES EFFORTS IN RULE MAKING TO MAKE OUR INDUSTRY SAFE FOR WILDLIFE WE INTRODUCED A LAW TO MAKE IT MANDATORY TO TEST OUR ELK FOR HYBRIDS FOR THREE YEARS. THE INDUSTRY HAS MADE THE HYBRID ISSUE A MUTE POINT. ALL ELK HYBRIDS WERE DESTROYED OR REMOVED FROM THE STATE.
- 4) IN RULE MAKING WE MADE IT A LAW TO TAG OUR ANIMALS SO THEY COULD BE IDENTIFIED AT A DISTANCE SO THAT WE OR FWP COULD REMOVE THEM FROM THE WILD POPULATION IF THEY ESCAPED.
- 5) ELK AND DEER ARE STILL THE MOST DISEASE TESTED ANIMALS IN THE STATE OF MONTANA. WE NOW HAVE 6 YEARS TESTING FOR CWD. TESTING FOUND THE FIRST CWD DISEASED ANIMALS AND TESTING HAS NOT IDENTIFIED ANY MORE ON OUR MONTANA GAME FARMS. IT IS NOT LIKELY CWD IS AN ISSUE ON GAME FARMS IN MONTANA.

BRUCELOSIS HAS BEEN TESTED FOR SINCE 1992 ON GAME FARMS IN MONTANA AND NONE HAVE EVER BEEN FOUND. THIS IS NOT TRUE OF WILD ELK AS WE HAVE A POPULATION THAT HAS AS HIGH AS A 7% INFECTION RATE.

THERE HAS NOT BEEN A TB ELK OR DEER FOUND IN MONTANA AFTER TESTING FIRST STARTED IN 1992 AND FOUND IT ON ON FOUR GAME RANCHES. THESE RANCHES WERE IDENTIFIED, ANIMALS TESTED AND DESTROYED. TB HAS NOT BEEN FOUND ON OUR RANCHES SINCE. THIS SHOULD PROVE TO YOU TESTING HAS WORKED AND ELIMINATED TB ON GAME FARMS AND THE ELK LEFT IN THE STATE ARE HEALTHY.

- 6) IN RULE MAKING I AS REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE INDUSTRY AGREED TO FORFEIT THE VALUE OF OUR ANIMALS IF THEY ESCAPED SO THAT THE ANIMALS BECAME THE PROPERTY OF THE STATE SO THAT THE STATE COULD DESTROY THEM TO PROTECT THE STATES WILDLIFE FROM THE WHAT IFS, COULD HAPPEN, MIGHT HAPPEN PROBLEMS PRESENTED AT THAT TIME. THESE PROBLEMS ARE NOW MITIGATED BECAUSE ALL THE LAWS PUT IN PLACE HAVE HAD TIME TO WORK AND ELIMINATE WHAT WAS OUR PERCEIVED PROBLEMS AT THAT TIME. WE ARE A HEALTHY SAFE INDUSTRY NOW. THERE IS NO JUSTIFICATION FOR DOUBLE FENCING OR FOR THE ANIMALS CAPTURE EXPENSES TO BE PAID FOR BY THE GAME FARM OWNER BECAUSE OUR ANIMALS ESCAPE CAUSES NO MORE HARM THAN AN ESCAPED COW OR SHEEP. THE NEW LAWS PUT IN PLACE HAVE WORKED & PROTECTED THE STATES WILDLIFE. WE NEED NO MORE PUNITIVE LAWS AGAINST THIS INDUSTRY AS I-143 WAS ENOUGH. THANK YOU.