

January 20, 2011

SB144: An act prohibiting relocation of wild buffalo and free-roaming bison.

Introduced by John Brenden

I stand in support of prohibiting relocation and free-roaming buffalo/bison.

I also have a couple of concerns and questions.

My husband's family farm is located within the boundaries of the Fort Peck Reservation. His grandfather purchased a homesteader's farm in the 1930s. The farm has grown over three generations. The family holds title to the land, and it is private land...as is a good percentage of the Reservation.

None of my husband's family members or I are tribal members. We have, over the years, had some difficulties resulting from the jurisdictional mess the Federal government has created there.

As you consider this bill, please consider the following questions.

1. If animals are allowed to be relocated to a Reservation, will the State maintain jurisdiction over the animals to protect farmers and ranchers (both tribal and non-tribal) from damages to fences, crops, haystacks, livestock, equipment, water supplies, personal injury, etc?
2. What will be the penalties for allowing animals to roam free or escape an enclosure?
3. Who will prosecute violations? In past instances of animal and human trespass, tribal authorities have failed to pursue prosecution, even when positive identification through photographic evidence has been submitted.
4. What legal redress will be available for anyone damaged by relocated and/or free-roaming animals?

The simplest way to avoid problems is to prohibit relocation and free-roaming animals, so my husband and I stand in support of this bill.

Thank you,

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