



QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Date: 10 December 2019
To: Natural Resources Committee
From: Jacob Pries, Policy Intern
Re: Opposition to Legislative Bill 46

On behalf of the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA), we would like to state our opposition to Legislative Bill 46 which bans the hunting of mountain lions within the state of Nebraska. The QDMA is a national nonprofit wildlife conservation organization dedicated to ensuring the future of white-tailed deer, wildlife habitat and our hunting heritage. The QDMA has over 60,000 members nationwide and our membership includes hunters, landowners and natural resource professionals.

At our core, QDMA believes that in order to have a sustainable white-tailed deer population across the country, white-tailed deer herds must be properly managed. This includes the regulation of predators that prey on white-tailed deer. Hunters provide a free ecological service in maintaining wildlife populations. They play an active role in controlling the overabundance of predators within an ecosystem. Additionally, hunters contribute greatly to the funding of conservation within the state of Nebraska. Hunters help contribute approximately 80% of state fish and wildlife agencies' budgets each year. This funding is crucial to the continued perpetuation of services provided by the agencies. Additionally, according to the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, hunters in Nebraska have contributed \$13.50 million in hunting license fees in 2018, helped contribute \$780 million annually to the state's economy and helped support 12,085 jobs.

Taking away sources of this funding and the power for the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to regulate the hunting of mountain lions, will have detrimental effects on mountain lions, the white-tailed deer population, and the economy within your state. Decisions on the hunting of mountain lions must be made with the backing of sound management practices leading to the continued existence of mountain lions for generations to come. By preserving the authority of Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to regulate hunting, this helps to ensure science-based management decisions regarding mountain lions in Nebraska that will have many beneficial effects to mountain lions and other wildlife such as white-tailed deer.

Whitetails are the most popular big game animal in the U.S., and whitetail hunters are the foundation of a nearly \$67 billion hunting industry. According to the National Shooting Sports Foundation, approximately three of every four hunters pursue whitetails. This piece of legislation has significant implications on many sectors within the state of Nebraska. It is vital that you take the lead as legislators and support the continued flow of conservation dollars in the state of Nebraska as you place your stamp on the conservation legacy of the state. On behalf of the QDMA, we would like to thank you for your time, consideration, and dedicated service to the state of Nebraska.

Respectfully,

Jacob Pries
Policy Intern
Quality Deer Management Association