

# Rep. Shankland: Introduces proposal to fund CWD research and management

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MADISON – Rep. Katrina Shankland (D-Stevens Point) circulated legislation yesterday to help tackle the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in Wisconsin by supplementing funding to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for CWD testing and research.

CWD is a neurological disease that is 100% fatal. The Wisconsin DNR first detected CWD in a white-tailed deer in 2002. Since then, over 3,500 deer have tested positive for CWD and the disease has spread to 41 counties. Even more troublesome is a recent [study](#) by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, which found that CWD may be orally transmitted to primates through the eating of infected meats – heightening concerns about human susceptibility to CWD.

“With the fall deer hunt approaching in just a few months, there is cause for real concern with the resurgence and spread of CWD across the state’s deer herd,” said Rep. Shankland. “Infection rates in Wisconsin appear to be at an all-time high, and meaningful action is needed to preserve the deer that our state’s billion dollar hunting industry relies on.”

Despite the many concerns, DNR spending on CWD management has dwindled from \$1.7 million in fiscal year 2013 to just \$700,000 in fiscal year 2016. In fiscal year 2016, the DNR spent just \$1,700 on CWD research – a nearly 99% cut from three years prior. Rep. Shankland’s bill recognizes the importance of CWD testing and

research by providing \$200,000 annually to the DNR for this purpose.

“Hunting is a way of life and a proud tradition in Wisconsin, and the health and vitality of our state’s deer herd is paramount,” continued Rep. Shankland. “My bill makes a responsible investment to help preserve our state’s deer hunt for generations to come. Given the urgency of the CWD threat facing our state, I hope my Republican colleagues will join me in supporting this common-sense legislation.”