

U.S. Reps. Kind, Sensenbrenner: Introduce bipartisan bill to manage and prevent the spread of chronic wasting disease in Wisconsin

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Wisconsin – Today, **U.S. Reps. Ron Kind** (D-WI) and **Jim Sensenbrenner** (R-WI) of Wisconsin introduced a bipartisan, bicameral bill to manage and prevent the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). Companion legislation was introduced in the Senate by **Senator Jon Tester** (D-MT).

The *Chronic Wasting Disease Management Act* will support state and tribal efforts to develop and implement management strategies and support research regarding the causes of chronic wasting disease. The bill will also support methods to control the spread of the disease. As of February of this year, CWD has been confirmed in 26 states, and there are serious concerns that the disease will continue to spread to herds across the country.

“Being a hunter is a big part of who I am, and the Wisconsin way of life. I know firsthand how vital it is that we maintain a healthy deer herd across our state, so we can protect our outdoor traditions and our outdoor economy. Chronic Wasting Disease has the potential to devastate our deer herds, which is why we’re working together to introduce a bipartisan bill that brings scientists, local officials, and hunters to the table to help manage and prevent the spread of the disease,” said **Rep. Ron Kind**.

“Hunting is an important family-centered activity for hundreds of thousands of Wisconsinites and has a multi-billion dollar economic impact on our state. Unfortunately, hunters have to be careful of CWD and the potential dangers it poses to humans. This bipartisan legislation would support state and tribal efforts to control and reduce CWD, helping to make our beautiful state’s wildlife healthier and safer for all. I’m grateful to Congressman Kind for leading this effort with me,” said **Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner**.

“The spread of Chronic Wasting Disease puts our outdoor economy and Montana way of life at risk. This bill will give state and tribal agencies access to the resources they need to combat this disease before it permanently diminishes our big-game herds and limits our ability to hunt,” said **Sen. Jon Tester**.

The *Chronic Wasting Disease Management Act* is also supported by several wildlife and sportsmen organizations, including the: Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies, National Wildlife Federation, Wildlife Management Institute, Quality Deer Management Association, and National Deer Alliance.

“The funding and help with research outlined in the legislation by Representatives Kind and Sensenbrenner would give the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources the kind of support it needs as it grapples with the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease in the state. Wisconsin’s deer herds are critically important to the state’s more than 600,000 gun hunters and 225,000 bow hunters. They represent an estimated \$1 billion in annual economic benefits for the state” said **George Meyer, Executive Director** of the **Wisconsin Wildlife Federation**.

“The Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation (CSF) has long recognized that increased attention to, and funding for, regular screening and testing of cervids at the state level is necessary to ensure a timely response in the event of a Chronic Wasting Disease outbreak. We commend the leadership of Congressional Sportsmen’s Caucus members Representative Kind and Senator Tester on this critical wildlife management issue,” said **Jeff Crane, President** of the **Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation**.

“This legislation will provide wildlife management agencies with much needed resources to stop the spread of this horrible disease. We must combat chronic wasting disease to protect our hunting traditions and outdoor recreation economy.

We want to thank Representatives Kind and Sensenbrenner and Senator Tester for their leadership on this issue and urge strong bipartisan support for this bill,” **Whit Fosburgh, President** and **CEO** of the **Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership**.

According to Wisconsin’s Department of Natural Resources, [1,049 deer tested positive](#) for CWD in 19 counties across Wisconsin in 2018. Eight of those 19 counties are in Wisconsin’s Third Congressional District, which Rep. Kind represents, and include Grant, Crawford, Richland, Adams, Juneau, Portage, Eau Claire and Vernon counties.

Read H.R. 1550, the Chronic Wasting Disease Management Act [here](#).