

U.S. Rep. Kind: Introduces the bipartisan Chronic Wasting Disease Research and Management Act

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Washington, DC – Today, **U.S. Reps. Ron Kind (D-WI)** and **Glenn “GT” Thompson (R-PA)** introduced a bipartisan bill to research and manage the spread of chronic wasting disease (CWD), a contagious, neurological disease affecting cervids – deer, elk and moose – that is always fatal.

There is no known cure for CWD and it’s unclear how the disease is transmitted. As of August 2021, CWD has been confirmed in 25 states, and there are serious concerns that the disease will continue to spread to herds across the country. The *Chronic Wasting Disease Research and Management Act* will support state and tribal efforts to develop and implement management strategies as well as fund research into methods to better detect and prevent CWD.

“As an avid hunter, I know how important it is to maintain a healthy deer herd in Wisconsin so we can protect our outdoor traditions and economy,” said **Rep. Ron Kind**. “CWD is a serious threat to our deer herds, and we need all hands on deck to combat this disease. That’s why I’m proud to team up with my colleague Rep. Thompson and introduce this bipartisan bill that brings scientists, local officials, and hunters to the table to help manage and prevent the spread of CWD.”

“CWD has been a big problem for the deer populations of Pennsylvania and additional cervid animals, such as elk and moose, throughout the country,” **Rep. Thompson** said. “This bill was crafted with robust stakeholder support and will prioritize research in the transmission of, resistance to, and diagnosis of CWD. It is

imperative we better understand the genetic implications of the disease, so we can develop policies best suited to solve the problem. I look forward to moving quickly with my colleagues in Congress to do our part in eradicating CWD.”

The *Chronic Wasting Disease Research and Management Act* is also supported by several wildlife and sportsmen organizations, including: the Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation (CSF), Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP), National Wildlife Federation (NWF), Boone & Crockett, National Deer Association (NDA), North American Deer Farmers Association (NADeFA), Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF), and the Mule Deer Foundation.

“The Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation (CSF) applauds Congressional Sportsmen’s Caucus Members Reps. Kind and Thompson for their leadership in introducing a practical, bipartisan, and comprehensive bill to address one of today’s most critical wildlife management issues – chronic wasting disease (CWD),” said **CSF President and CEO Jeff Crane**. “This legislation unites all interested CWD stakeholders – including America’s 55 million sportsmen and women – in a focused policy effort, and is an unprecedented step forward in addressing this concerning disease.”

“The threat posed by CWD to deer hunting in America is difficult to overstate—for too long, funding woes, research questions, and ineffectual enforcement have resulted in a worsening status quo,” said **Whit Fosburgh, president and CEO of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership**. “Curbing the accelerated spread of this disease each year requires an all-encompassing effort that can only be achieved by the pragmatic, bipartisan approach in this bill. The TRCP and our partners are grateful for the leadership of Representatives Kind and Thompson and look forward to working alongside both lawmakers to bring this critical legislation to passage.”

“Chronic wasting disease is one of the greatest threats facing deer, elk, and moose populations across the country, jeopardizing hunting opportunities, ecosystems, and our nation’s outdoor economy,” said **Mike Leahy, director for wildlife, hunting, and fishing policy for the National Wildlife Federation**. “We are grateful for Representatives Kind and Thompson’s steadfast leadership on this critical issue. The bipartisan Chronic Wasting Disease Research and Management Act will help ensure state and tribal agencies on the front lines of controlling this disease have

the resources they need to better understand and stop its spread.”

“Chronic wasting disease is a significant threat to many of our country’s native big game species, a challenge that affects both future hunting opportunity and the health of these ecologically important wildlife species,” said **James F. Arnold, president of the Boone and Crockett Club**. “We appreciate the continued leadership of Congressmen Kind and Thompson for their efforts to find solutions to this growing challenge. The legislation that they introduced today will provide critical new funding to state wildlife agencies that are on the front lines battling CWD.”

“Chronic Wasting Disease is not only a significant threat to deer, elk, and moose, it’s a threat to the management of all wildlife that is supported by the pursuit of these impacted species by hunters. The CWD Research and Management Act will help states and tribes manage the disease locally while providing much needed financial support to researchers working to find ways to stop it,” said **Nick Pinizzotto, National Deer Association President and CEO**.

The Mule Deer Foundation (MDF) is proud to support this important legislation proposed by Representatives Kind and Thompson to enhance and sustain important management efforts and research to combat chronic wasting disease (CWD), which is a contagious, neurological disease affecting deer, elk and moose – that is always fatal. “CWD is a serious threat to the future of deer conservation, this legislation addresses those issues that could drastically change the way mule deer and black-tailed deer are managed,” said **Joel Pedersen, President and CEO of the Mule Deer Foundation**.

“On behalf of the North American Deer Farmers Association (NADeFA), we would like to thank Ranking Member Glenn Thompson (R-PA) and Congressman Ron Kind (D-WI) for writing a truly impactful piece of legislation to fight Chronic Waste Disease (CWD). This bill will enable us to develop the scientific tools necessary to combat CWD in farmed and wild deer populations. This disease has not received the federal attention it deserves, until now. I would like to thank hunting and conservation organizations who sat down with us to find common ground. In the past, research dollars have been very limited, but with our new federal partners, it will allow universities, Tribes, state agriculture, and wildlife agencies to access federal funds necessary to carry out critical research. We owe it to our hunters, family farms, children, and future conservation efforts across this great country to

collectively pass this important legislation,” said **Shawn Schafer, NADeFA Executive Director.**

Read more about the bipartisan bill [here.](#)