



QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Date: 2 April 2008
To: Game and Fisheries Committee
From: Kip Adams, Northern Director of Education and Outreach
Re: House Bills 2205 and 2364

On behalf of the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA) I am writing to state our support for House Bills 2205 and 2364 which would increase fines and penalties for wildlife violations and allow Pennsylvania to join the Interstate Wildlife Violators Compact. The QDMA is an international nonprofit wildlife conservation organization dedicated to ethical hunting, sound deer management and preservation of the deer-hunting heritage. The QDMA has over 50,000 members nationwide, including more than 2,500 of the nation's leading wildlife and forestry professionals. As such, QDMA is widely regarded as the most respected whitetail organization in the United States.

Wildlife is held in trust by the Commonwealth for all of Pennsylvania's citizens to enjoy. This public ownership of wildlife is an instrumental component of the successful North American Model for Wildlife Conservation. Ethical sportsmen created and have supported the North American Model for the past century. Unfortunately, unlawful activities with respect to wildlife contrast the Model, and illegally killing wildlife is nothing less than public theft.

White-tailed deer are the keystone species in HB 2205. Whitetails are the most popular big game animal in the U.S., and whitetail hunters are the foundation of the \$67 billion hunting industry. According to the National Shooting Sports Foundation, approximately three of every four hunters pursue whitetails, and in Pennsylvania approximately one million hunters contribute over \$2.2 billion annually to the state's economy and provide over 19,000 jobs. Wildlife viewing is also important to Pennsylvania. A similar report conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service showed that in 2006, nearly four million wildlife viewers contributed another \$1.3 billion to the state's economy.

Whether for viewing or hunting, white-tailed deer are captivating, and this is especially true for large-antlered bucks. Part of their appeal lies in their relative scarcity due to the difficulty of raising one to maturity. Many of these animals are taken prior to maturity by hunters, are involved in deer-vehicle collisions, or they succumb to disease or other mortality factors. Thus, the investment of time, sweat equity and monetary resources required to grow a mature deer is substantial. These resources are far greater than the current restitution value of a deer "stolen" by a poacher.

House Bills 2205 and 2364 would allow the Game Commission to collect current and acceptable restitution values for wildlife species, and further curb poachers from conducting their illegal activities in Pennsylvania. They will benefit the commonwealth, its wildlife and citizenry, and the QDMA urges you to support House Bills 2205 and 2364. Thank you for consideration of this important matter and for your commitment to Pennsylvania natural resources.

Respectfully,

Kip Adams
Northern Director of Education & Outreach

*The QDMA is dedicated to ethical hunting, sound deer management
and the preservation of the deer-hunting heritage.*
