



# QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Date: 14 February 2012  
To: House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources  
From: Kip Adams, Director of Education and Outreach  
Re: House Bill 2709

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On behalf of the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA) I am writing to support HB 2709 which would establish an appropriate restitution value for unlawfully taken antlered white-tailed deer. The QDMA is a national nonprofit wildlife conservation organization dedicated to ethical hunting, sound deer management and preservation of the deer-hunting heritage. The QDMA has nearly 50,000 members nationwide, and our membership includes hunters, landowners and natural resource professionals.

Wildlife is held in trust by the State for all of Kansas' 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 2709. 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 Kansas over 200,000 hunters contribute over \$464 million annually to the state's economy and provide nearly 6,000 jobs. Wildlife viewing is also important to Kansas. A similar report conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service showed that in 2006, 816,000 wildlife viewers contributed another \$156 million 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 Bill 2709 would allow the state to collect current and acceptable restitution values for wildlife species, and further curb poachers from conducting their illegal activities in Kansas. They will benefit the state, its wildlife and citizenry, and the QDMA urges you to support House Bill 2709. Thank you for consideration of this important matter and for your commitment to Kansas' natural resources.

Respectfully,

*Kip Adams*

Kip Adams  
Director of Education and Outreach