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July 28, 2020

Senator Ed McBroom
Chair, Natural Resources Committee
Michigan Senate

Via email to Jackie Mosher, Committee Clerk, ofcsc@senate.michigan.gov and jmosher@senate.michigan.gov

Re: Opposition to SB 367, Senate Natural Resources Committee Meeting, July 29, 2020, 9AM

Dear Senator McBroom and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information to the committee. Attorneys for Animals, Inc. (AFA), is a Michigan non-profit and 501(c)(3) organization of legal professionals and animal advocates. The organization's Board of Directors has voted to oppose SB 367.

SB 367 amends the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act regarding hunting and fishing licenses for nonresidents. Almost casually, and seemingly apropos nothing, the bill includes this sentence: "For a qualified nonresident, the fee for a nonresident wolf hunting license is \$250."ⁱ

We remind the Committee that gray wolves remain protected under the Endangered Species Act despite the fact that efforts are underway, both in this legislature and by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), to delist the species, and to turn over management to the states.

This bill is a brazen attempt to insert politics into this issue. It is the latest salvo in a long, involved and contentious effort to hunt wolves in Michigan. This bill, along with various resolutions that have been presented to the legislature over the past several sessionsⁱⁱ, flies in the face of the requirement that the decision to delist is based not only on the science, but on a determination that the state is "well prepared to manage gray wolves in the best interests of its residents." Further, if a species is delisted, the USFWS is required to conduct at least 5 years of "Post-Delisting Monitoring."ⁱⁱⁱ SB 367, by prematurely providing for licenses (for non-residents no less) to kill wolves, should give serious pause to the federal agency charged with monitoring the species, an effort that includes "assurances that adequate protections are in

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place to ensure their survivability.” Rather, this bill instead demonstrates the free-wheeling attitude and rush to establish a season for wolves.

AFA has previously expressed concern about the ability of the DNR/NRC to manage gray wolves.^{iv} If the legislature passes this bill, it adds to the concern about Michigan’s ability to manage this species.

We urge Senators to not report this resolution out of Committee.

Very Truly Yours,



Beatrice M. Friedlander, JD
President

ⁱ SB 367, page 3, lines 1-3, <https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2019-2020/billintroduced/Senate/pdf/2019-SIB-0367.pdf>

ⁱⁱ E.g. SR 0038, <http://legislature.mi.gov/doc.aspx?2019-SR-0038>

ⁱⁱⁱ This concern has been expressed by a report accompanying the Appropriations Bill for 2021, for the Department of the Interior. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 2d Session 116–448 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2021 JULY 14, 2020 at page 19: “The Committee has long championed the need for listing decisions to be based on science, not politics. In the current political climate, the Committee remains concerned about proposals to remove iconic species from the endangered species list before there are assurances that adequate protections are in place to ensure their survivability. The gray wolf is an example of a species of concern... The Committee directs that if the Service is going to delist a species based on the best available science, the Service must first carefully analyze state management plans to ensure adequate protections will be in place and then establish a stringent monitoring system that guarantees there is rigorous enforcement of those plans.” https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CRPT-116hrpt448/pdf/CRPT-116hrpt448.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3v9k1glloiWR56kntqcDFED5_763bWVJgtRTMUJ_94PpOpQbLT7_2cjGw

^{iv} See, e.g., our testimony to this Committee on April 24, 2019, in opposition to SR 0038, <https://committees.senate.michigan.gov/testimony/2019-2020/All%20testimony%20regardin%20SR%2038%20-%20opposed.pdf> and our Comment on the USFWS Proposed Rule, “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Removing the Gray Wolf (*Canis lupus*) from the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife”, <https://www.regulations.gov/document?D=FWS-HQ-ES-2018-0097-105861>