



February 8, 2024

Chair Helm, Vice Chair Owens and Hartman, members of the committee.

I appreciate the opportunity to address the committee this afternoon on House Bill 4061 – the creation of an elk depredation pilot program.

Counties were included in the interim Legislative led workgroup and actively participated in the conversations on what this program should look like and how it should be administered. Counties across the state have been experiencing a rising level of elk damage to crops and agricultural lands over the years and this bill is a step in the right direction to help alleviate those issues. Although counties would have been happy and willing to administer the program locally, like we do for the Wolf Depredation program, we understand the need to house the program within the Department of Agriculture during this initial start up of the program. We also understand the need for this two county or area approach in the bill to “test the waters” of this elk pilot program. We look forward to working with the Department in any way we can to help get this program off the ground during this pilot period.

Thank you again Mr. Chair for the opportunity to participate during the interim and for allowing counties the opportunity to weigh in on this important issue.

AOC supports House Bill 4061 and encourages the committees support of this important concept.

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