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Opposition Testimony
on
H. B. No. 267
by
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Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am John Gilchrist and I am here on behalf of the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police to express the Association's opposition to certain provisions in H. B. No. 267. The Association is opposed to the provision that would require the training of law enforcement officers regarding the humane procedures for euthanizing injured deer. The Association also opposes the provision dealing with the transfer of an injured deer to a deer rehabilitation center.

It should be noted that these provisions apply to all law enforcement officers who have the authority to enforce wildlife laws and Division of Wildlife rules. Pursuant to Section 1533.16, which is not in the bill, the law enforcement officers affected would include police officers, sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, constables as well as wildlife officers.

TRAINING: Section 109.74(B) (lines 177-185) provides that the Attorney General shall provide training for law enforcement officer regarding the humane procedures for euthanizing deer injured in an motor vehicle accident. The concerns of the Association are as follows:

a) Since there is no appropriation for this training, who pays for the training? Is this going to create an unfunded liability for agencies?

b) There is more pressing training that agencies would like to provide to their officers but lack the funds to do so. These would include training in the use of force, firearms, preventing bias based policing practices, and legal update. In short, training in the humane procedures for euthanizing deer would not be a priority.

TRANSFER: Lines 300-304 provides for the transfer of an injured deer to a deer rehabilitation center.

The concerns of the Association are as follows:

a) What will be required of the officer who is required to transfer the injured deer to a rehabilitation center? Will the officer be required to transport the injured deer? If the officer does not have to transport the deer, will the officer have to wait for someone from the rehabilitation center to arrive? The center could be some distance from the accident scene and if the accident occurs in the evening, the rehabilitation official will not be able to find the deer unless the officer remains on the scene. This could tie up an officer for a number of hours.

b) The Westerville chief of police indicates that Metroparks has tried to relocate healthy deer living in Sharon Woods Metro Park because these deer were leaving the Park area and causing traffic

accidents. When they attempted to relocate these healthy deer they found that the deer often die from stress and shock during the transportation. Deer being transported to a rehabilitation center would undergo even more stress and shock because of the injury. Stated differently, transporting the deer would be more damaging to the deer and cause much more pain and suffering. In most instances it would be more humane to put down the deer at the scene of the accident.