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Cathy Stepp, DNR Secretary
101 South Webster Street
PO Box 7921
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Dear Secretary Stepp,

I am writing on behalf of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress, to voice our concern with the decision of the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals in regards to allowing the hunting of deer at night by Chippewa tribal members in the ceded territory and to encourage the Department of Natural Resources and State of Wisconsin to exhaustively explore all of the options available to appeal this decision.

The ruling of this court, which does not appear to be based on the facts of the case, sets an alarming precedent on any number of levels including dismissing significant public safety concerns for night hunting off reservation in the ceded territory, setting an extremely low standard for opening other previously final judgments of the Voight decision, and the requirement that the state pay the tribe's attorney fees while the tribes receive federal taxpayer resources to litigate these cases. The judges in this case assumed facts that were not in evidence (such as "hunting deer during the day is likely to be more dangerous"...than hunting deer at night) and overturned a Wisconsin judge with 30 years of experience in Wisconsin/ Chippewa treaty rights issues.

The social repercussions of this judgment will likely be considerable and will be felt by all citizens of the state. This case could have a substantial negative impact on already strained relations between tribal members and non-tribal members. In addition to the significant safety concerns involved with shooting deer at night, the judgment to essentially allow shining and shooting of deer is contrary to the North American Hunting Ethic and Fair Chase; the two principles that are cornerstones for modern wildlife conservation in this country. And it opens the state to the uncertainty of years of potential continuous litigation on previously decided issues.

For the aforementioned reasons, I urge the state to appeal the decision of the Seventh Circuit Court by any means possible.

Rob Bohmann, Chair
Wisconsin Conservation Congress

As established by Wisconsin State Statutes, the Wisconsin Conservation Congress is officially recognized as the only natural resources advisory body in the state where citizens elect delegates to represent their interests on natural resources issues on a local and statewide level to the Natural Resources Board and the Department of Natural Resources. Their mission is to represent the citizens of Wisconsin by working with the Natural Resources Board and the Department of Natural Resources to effectively manage Wisconsin's greatest asset, our abundant natural resources, for present and future generations to enjoy.