

My name is Arlyn Briggs.

Thank you for allowing me to speak today about the the proposed Lehigh Portland state park in Allen county just south of lola, KS.

I grew up on a farm about 20 miles NE of lola in Anderson county. All of the property I own is in Allen county thus the concern with the proposed park and the expenses that face the state if this is allowed to continue. I have been a member of lola Industries for a number of years.

One of the major concerns is the buildings that are submerged in the lake and the abandoned equipment that also exists. You can be 20 feet deep and just a few feet away have rebar and other debris less than 2 feet under water. Unless you know where that is located you will have difficulty in trying to navigate even in a small boat. The same is true of fishing as your lines will hang up on the same things.

People used to take pontoon boats on the body of water and constantly ran into these obstacles and they were from the area.

In order for this body of water to be safe it should be drained and all of these things should be removed. I question if that was considered by the Department of Parks. What is the game plan for this action? How much will it cost to accomplish this cleanup? How long will it take? How does that use of money impact other existing lakes? Another nearby park lake, Bourbon County, near Erie is in need of work on roads and cleanup of brush. If KS can not take care of the existing parks why would they even think about taking on more to maintain?

As a member of lola Industries I find the leadership is not transparent with members. It is a good ole boy club where people who do not belong to the clique have little if any chance of voicing concerns. I have been denied the opportunity to address the board on more than one occasion. What are they hiding from the members on this proposal? There have been numerous articles in the lola Register, the local newspaper. I have responded to multiple articles only to have my responses removed from the online site almost immediately.

A few years ago the county commission agreed to participate in an appraisal of the property to the tune of \$10,000. I have asked for information on that appraisal and have been met with deaf ears. Both the city of lola and Allen county want nothing to do with taking on the property? Why? If it is such a great thing why would they not want to be in control of it? I believe they know it is a money and liability pit. There was talk of letting a private developer do something with it? Again no takers have ever come forward. Both lola and Allen county want the benefit but not the headaches that will go with it.

Early on it had promise of being a gun range until people started shoot at objects that were off limits. That was the end of that plan.

I think it would behoove the legislature to get a very detailed plan on how the project would be financed. I don't think the money still exists to complete such a project without impacting other state parks. While you are looking at the financing, I would suggest you look at the relationship between Thrive Allen County, lola, Allen county and lola Industries. Do some hard looking at those relationships and membership of the leaders. It is a very controlled circle of people with ties back to the owner of the paper and even back a few years ago to the current Lt. Governor. It is all about buying favor for the future.

Other projects in the area are of the same pattern, you do this for me and I will do something for you in return It smacks of the current problem in the state and the country. It is all about money and buying votes.

I urge you to consider what to do as though all the money was coming from your billfold. Would you be willing to foot the bill? You should think that way. Kansas taxpayers should not be saddled with bailing out an organization that got into something without counting the true cost.

Thank you for your consideration in not approving HB 2331.

Sincerely,

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Sincerely,