

STATE OF KANSAS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



STATE CAPITOL
TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612
(785) 296-7365
rebecca.schmoe@senate.ks.gov

1526 S. CEDAR STREET
OTTAWA, KANSAS 66067

REBECCA SCHMOE
59TH DISTRICT

House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

Testimony HB 2476

Representative Rebecca Schmoe, proponent

Mr. Chairman, Vice Chair, Ranking Minority, and Committee Members,

I am testifying as a proponent for HB 2476 for the same two reasons we bring up in nearly every committee hearing on both sides of the rotunda; fiscal responsibility and local control.

I will begin by addressing the fiscal note you have in front of you. Our goal with this bill is not to approve nor deny any current or future designations of Kansas land. That is not what we are doing here today. At this time I am entirely neutral as to the current funding of any and all of the mentioned areas, parks, and trails. That being established, I am a proponent of installing direct accountability for the state funds being spent to buy, build, maintain, and service these vital resources in and around our communities. It is the constitutional obligation of the Legislature to set forth a budget each year. We are the stewards of Kansas taxpayer money. We determine through budget committees and appropriations how that tax money will be spent. The reason we do this is so that the Kansas taxpayer has the power to hold their elected officials accountable for how their money is being spent. When unelected individuals, boards, or entities make these determinations it is nearly impossible for the taxpayer to hold anyone accountable for the expenditure or lack there of.

Likewise, this bill establishes local control and gives Kansans a direct, and elected, point of contact when dealing with the designation, use, and maintenance of Kansas land. We all agree that our areas, parks, and trails here in Kansas are second to none. We all agree that these places are a resource which should be properly maintained and protected for generations to come. Once again, I am speaking of stewardship. Not of money this time, but of something far more valuable, natural resources.

In both instances, fiscal responsibility, as well as local control, I am merely asking that you give Kansans a clear avenue to hold their elected officials accountable for the designation, use, and maintenance of Kansas land. Our constituents deserve that clarity and it is our responsibility as the legislature to provide them with that avenue of accountability. As President Truman coined, and I am encouraging you to instill with the passage of HB 2476, "The buck stops here."

In service and liberty,

Rebecca Schmoe

Kansas House of Representatives—District 59