



February 6, 2025

To: Chairperson Ken Rahjes and House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

Re: House Bill 2063 – Proponent Testimony

**From: Bill Maasen, Superintendent of Parks & Golf Courses
Johnson County Park and Recreation District**

Chairperson Rahjes and Committee Members:

The Johnson County Park and Recreation District (JCPRD) has been a leader in outdoor recreation and conservation in our region for almost 70 years. Each year, JCPRD records more than 7 million park visitors and nearly 2 million recreation participants across more than 4,000 programs. JCPRD manages over 10,000 acres of parkland and 151 miles of trails, including paved, single-track, equestrian, and water trails. These spaces and programs are essential to the well-being of our community, providing opportunities for outdoor recreation, environmental education, and connection with nature.

A dedicated conservation fund would be a game-changer for Johnson County and the state of Kansas, helping protect natural areas, improve water quality, and expand outdoor recreation opportunities. Investments in conservation directly impact public health, offering safe spaces for families to explore, exercise, and unwind. These funds would also help combat habitat loss, mitigate flooding, and improve air quality, creating a more resilient and sustainable future for all Kansans.

Beyond environmental benefits, HB 2063 would drive economic growth by supporting tourism and attracting visitors to our parks and natural spaces. Parks and open spaces are proven economic drivers, supporting local businesses and increasing property values. Conservation funding would also allow us to preserve the beauty and recreational opportunities that make our region a desirable place to live, work and visit. This bill represents an investment in both our environment and our economy, strengthening Kansas communities for years to come.

I urge you to support HB 2063 for the benefit of our natural resources, our residents, and our economy. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Bill Maasen

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OUR MISSION

To enrich our community
through excellence in parks,
recreation, culture, education,
and public service.

**ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
DIVISION**

Rhonda Pollard, Superintendent
JCPRD Administration Building
7900 Renner Road
Shawnee Mission, KS 66219
913-438-7275 (PARK)



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