Dear Representatives,

I am writing to express my support for HB 2063 for the creation of a Kansas conservation fund.

I am a fifth generation Kansan, a descendant of bison ranchers, and I lived in many other states and countries before returning home to Kansas in 2021 and becoming passionate about Kansas nature.

Pandemic restrictions were still in effect in 2021, so I spent as much time in nature as I possibly could. As I began posting photos of my adventures, friends from other parts of the world couldn't believe how beautiful Kansas was. With only about 2% of land available to the public, the natural beauty of Kansas is one of our best kept secrets. I made it my mission to document and share the incredible biodiversity of our prairies, woodlands and wetlands through my social media page Kansas Hikes, which has now begun to gain some popularity a few years later.

As I've learned more and more about nature in Kansas, I've realized how desperately we need a conservation fund. As long as many aren't aware of our natural treasures, they are less likely to protect them. For example, a lot of folks don't realize that our prairie ecosystems are among the most endangered in the world, with only 4% remaining in North America. The prairie is the Amazon Rainforest of Kansas and it is so important that we protect it for future generations—not only for its beauty, but for its ability to resist climate change, anchor soil, and for the food and medicinal properties of the hundreds of native species growing here.

I am so proud to be a Kansan and am grateful this important bill is being introduced! Let's protect our beautiful and unique land & wildlife for our children and grandchildren.

Kind regards, Andie Perdue