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KS House Ag and Natural Resources Committee
Topeka, KS

Committee Members,

Thank you in advance for reading my testimony. Between 2008 and 2010, NRCS contacted my grandfather, Chet Rexford, and talked him into lifetime contracting 320 acres into a wetlands conservation program for \$250,000.00 which in his eyes at his age, he thought was a "whale of a deal." He was living alone and unable to drive, and it sounded like one last good deal he could make at the end of his life.

I am now the third generation, and I own half of the 320 acres, which I can do absolutely nothing with, but pay property tax on. Upon his passing, the money he received went to death taxes, and my dad and I never got a penny of that money. The land is forever locked into this conservation lease. We are not allowed to farm it, raise cattle, cannot put hunting blinds on it, and can't do anything to earn any income on this property. I am stuck paying annual property taxes on the land because of the bad deal my grandfather was dealt. I cannot even sell this ground, because who would want to buy it if they cannot generate any income with the ground? I have dealt with these types of committees and meetings when this came up before, and was told I was uneducated, didn't understand the benefits, and I am living the nightmare which has NO benefit.

It has also lost its value even for hunting since the creek bottom was "reconfigured" by conservationists. There is not enough water contained in the creek bottom, and the trees have died near the cover and growth that it used to have. With the reconfiguration, it causes flooding on the neighboring farm ground and county roads when we do have our 7-year rain.

Neighbors are still unhappy with me to this day because of something that was done three generations ago under the guise of conservation and entities being smarter than the people who live here. I do not support one dollar of my tax money going to people associated with special interest groups, especially those who will use it to make a living off of us, and who will try to change our way of life. I take offense to people accusing me of being uneducated and not understanding their position when I am, in fact, living in the consequences of bad government influence, and that is education enough.

Sincerely,


Ondre Rexford