

KANSAS OUTDOOR HERITAGE ALLIANCE

To: House Committee on Federal and State Affairs, Rep. Tom Kessler, Chair

From: Kurt Ratzlaff on behalf of Kansas Outdoor Heritage Alliance

Date: February 4, 2026

RE: HB 2511 Modification of State Production Fund- Opponent testimony

Chairman Kessler and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide opposing testimony on HB2511.

The Kansas Outdoor Heritage Alliance (KOHA) recently came together to provide the Kansas legislature with the voice of Kansas hunters, anglers, trappers and houndsmen. We represent the interests of the everyday sportsmen and women out there walking in a field behind a bird dog, the angler sitting on the bank or in a small boat trying to catch a few fish to fry up, the trapper checking the line every day and the houndsmen listening to hear a dog sound off on a racoon. KOHA represents those of us who are not looking to make money off the outdoors, but do invest our passion, time, money, and effort. We are the backbone of the financial support of the outdoors and its conservation.

The following members of the Kansas Outdoor Heritage Alliance oppose HB 2511:

Delta Waterfowl

Ducks Unlimited

Kansas Backcountry Hunters and Anglers

Kansas Bowhunters Association

Kansas Federation of Houndsmen

Kansas Fur Harvesters Association

Kansas Hunters for Access

While we appreciate the flexibility this bill would provide to the Secretary of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks in addressing variations in costs and expenses, we are deeply concerned about how that flexibility could be used. Specifically, HB 2511 could allow income generated from wildlife management areas to be diverted to state parks, office buildings, nature education centers, or other state-owned properties.

Given the extremely limited acreage of public lands in Kansas, we strongly believe that funds generated from wildlife management areas should be reinvested back into those same lands. These funds are essential for maintaining wildlife habitat, public access, fencing, and other on-

the-ground management needs. This bill opens the door to the potential neglect of significant but lesser-known properties in favor of higher-profile or more politically advantageous locations, often in higher population areas.

Additionally, when KDWP manages land that includes agricultural production, the agency makes a good-faith effort to continue working with the land's previous lessees and provides PILT payments to ensure county treasuries do not lose tax revenue. Keeping production dollars within the local area supports these relationships and reinforces KDWP's role as a good neighbor across the state. Redirecting those funds elsewhere provides little local benefit and undermines that effort.

For these reasons, we respectfully ask you to oppose HB 2511 and ensure that revenue generated from wildlife management areas remains dedicated to the lands and communities that produce it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kurt Ratzlaff

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