

**House Committee on Federal and State Affairs  
Proponent Testimony of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks  
House Bill 2511**

February 4, 2026

Chairman Kessler and Members of the Committee,

At its January 2026 meeting, the Kansas Wildlife and Parks Commission voted to request the introduction of House Bill 2511.

The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks manages 177 public land properties encompassing 460,000 acres and 28 state parks covering about 32,000 acres of land. As a fee-funded agency, the Department maintains and improves its properties in part through income generated from leases for agricultural production on these properties, such as crop production, grazing, and haying. The money is then used in several ways to manage habitat on these properties, such as through tree and brush removal, prescribed fire burning, road and fence repairs, and wetland restoration and renovation.

K.S.A. 32-809 establishes the State Agricultural Production Fund. The statute requires the separate accounts for each of state-owned property managed by the Department and provides that all funds generated on each property may be used only “for costs and expenses associated with management practices as determined for each property.” K.S.A. 32-809(b). In other words, the Department is prohibited from using agricultural production money generated on one property to address the needs of its other public properties.

The statutory restriction in K.S.A. 32-809 significantly hinders the Department’s ability to maintain its properties. Only 80 of the 177 public lands and 20 of the 28 state parks generate any agricultural revenue. And among revenue generating properties, the amount of money generated varies significantly. For instance, in Fiscal Year 2025, the Grand Osage Wildlife Area generated \$105,823, while Shawnee State Fishing Lake generated only \$1,476. The Department requests the ability to manage its properties without unnecessary restrictions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information on House Bill 2511. I am happy to provide additional information at the appropriate time.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christopher Kennedy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

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Christopher Kennedy  
Secretary  
Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks