

MINUTES OF THE SENATE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Senator Robert Tyson at 8:30 a.m. on February 14, 2003 in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

Members present: Senator Downey, Senator Lee, Senator Tyson, Senator Taddiken, Senator Corbin, Senator Huelskamp

Committee staff present: Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research
Lisa Montgomery, Revisor of Statutes
Shannon Stone, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Steve Swaffar, Director of Natural Resources, Kansas Farm Bureau
Todd Johnson, Governmental Affairs Staff, Kansas Livestock Association
Francis Kelsey, Farmer/Rancher from Shawnee, Kansas
Dale E. Anderson, Executive Director, MidAmerican Division of the National
Association of Revisionary Property Owners, Garnett, KS (written testimony)

Others attending: See attached list

Chairman Tyson opened the meeting with a greeting to all conferees and guests.

Hearing on Senate Bill 81

The first conferee to appear before the Committee was Steve Swaffar of Kansas Farm Bureau (KFB). The Bureau opposed the provisions of **SB 81**. They were opposed to net increases in the amount of land owned by local state and federal government entities. KFB encouraged the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) to fully explore the option of leasing land rather than purchasing land. In the event that the Department would be allowed to acquire additional land, KFB requested several requirements be placed on the Department. (Attachment 1)

Todd Johnson of the Kansas Livestock Association provided Committee members with written testimony from Brian Dunn of St. John, KS (Attachment 2) and also spoke on behalf of his organization in opposition to the bill and provided a copy of KLA's resolution regarding private land. (Attachment 3) Additionally, Mr. Johnson stated that his members believe that KDWP should develop management plans based on feedback from landowners for existing public property.

Francis Kelsey, a farmer from northwest Shawnee county offered testimony in opposition to **SB 81** on the grounds that it would make Wildlife and Parks a competitive bidder with farmers for prime farm ground. He also felt that KDWP could gain access to more land through a leasing system than they might through ownership of private lands. (Attachment 4)

CONTINUATION SHEET

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Speaking on behalf of the Kansas Sport Hunting Association, President, Ken Corbet suggested that KDWP focus on more walk-in-hunting-areas and work with land owners to create better habitat environments and hunting access. (Attachment 5)

Dale Anderson, Executive Director of the MidAmerican Division of the National Association of Reversionary Property Owners submitted written testimony opposing **SB 81**. Building on the belief the Kansas land is chiefly agricultural and a vital part of the world's economy, and given current local government financial hardships, he stated that Kansas cannot afford to turn over thousands of acres to any state agency. Mr. Anderson concluded that the tax abatements that would be given to these lands, could mean that counties would be not be able to afford services for road and bridge maintenance. (Attachment 6)

Questions regarding access to outdoor recreation, noxious weed control, and acquisition of private land were responded to by conferees and representatives from KDWP. The Chair expressed his appreciation to all who presented testimony.

Minutes/Adjournment

Senator Huelskamp moved to approve the minutes as they stood, Senator Corbin seconded the motion and the motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 a.m.