



Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee  
Chair, the Honorable Representative Sean Tarwater  
State Capitol – Room 346-S

CC: Rep. Avery Anderson, Rep. Francis Awerkamp, Rep. Jesse Borjon, Rep. Tom Burroughs, Rep. Will Carpenter, Rep. Chris Croft, Rep. Pam Curtis, Rep. Michael Dodson, Rep. Ron Highland, Rep. Kyle Hoffman, Rep. Steven Johnson, Rep. Tom Kessler, Rep. Les Mason, Rep. Vic Miller, Rep. Jason Probst, Rep. Bradley Ralph, Rep. Louis Ruiz, Rep. William Sutton, Rep. Kristey Williams, and Rep Rui Xu

RE: Request to Oppose HB2331

I am writing on behalf of the Kansas State Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) asking that you please oppose the passage of HB2331. The NWTF is a member-based conservation organization with more than 3,000 members in Kansas and more than 230,000 nationwide. We work closely with the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism (KDWPT) to address mutually beneficial goals pursuant to wildlife and habitat conservation. I am submitting this letter as written documentation of our opposition to HB2331. Please include this letter in the public hearing record. The NWTF understands the vital role landowners and hunters play in wildlife conservation in Kansas. However, we believe the proposed legislation undermines science-based wildlife management and the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, decreases hunter access, transfers ownership of a natural resource from the citizens of Kansas to a few private individuals, and would reward few non-resident hunters at the expense of many Kansas residents who wish to conserve Kansas' natural resources.

The NWTF supports the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, which places emphasis on wildlife as a public resource and uses hunting as a management tool. This legislation, as prepared, does not encourage hunting as a management tool, and the bill does not mention reasonable access for hunting. In fact, it would limit access even further, and prevent KDWPT from utilizing science-based decision making to manage white-tailed deer in a state that is 98% privately owned, leaving them in a poor position to actually help the resource. Allowing transferable landowner/tenant deer permits could dramatically increase hunting pressure and harvest, subsequently impacting the age structure of harvested bucks. Because of this, the loss of a greater proportion of mature bucks would require several years for recovery of the resource and the possibility of more restrictive harvest regulations in the future, which would likely impact resident deer hunters the most.

Loss of access is a key factor in why fewer Kansans participate in hunting. Landowners and tenants already control access to their properties, and many choose to hunt it themselves or require compensation for the use of their property. This bill would divide the relationship further between landowners and hunters, decrease accessibility of hunting for residents that don't have their own land to hunt, and make it more difficult for KDWPT to manage their well-known deer population. This bill also undermines the ability of professional biologists to make science-based decisions for populations and upsets the social acceptability of the hunt permitting program by creating the opportunity for additional non-resident permits to be added to the number annually issued, incentivizing landowners and tenants who do not currently hunt to purchase permits for the sole intention of transference.

In addition to science-based resource management, the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation relies upon public ownership of wildlife and the democracy of hunting. This bill transfers the ownership of deer from all citizens of Kansas to a few private individuals and limits the purchase of these additional deer permits to the relatively few that can pay the fees. This bill risks sound wildlife management from KDWPT by placing more value on the short-term financial gain from wildlife than on scientific, sustainable, and socially acceptable wildlife management.

For the reasons stated, the Kansas Chapter of the NWTF respectfully asks the members of the Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee to oppose HB2331. Thank you for the opportunity to provide our position on this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adam Kukera', is located at the bottom left of the page.

**Adam Kucera**  
State Chapter President  
Kansas NWTF