

**Testimony on HB 2198 on Affiliating Certain KDWP Employees With the
Kansas Police and Fire Retirement System
To The House Committee on Financial Institutions and Pensions
By Brad Loveless
Secretary of Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks
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HB 2198 seeks to affiliate Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) law enforcement personnel with the Kansas Police and Fireman's Retirement System (KPF). KDWP supports the provisions of the bill. The provisions of the bill would be effective upon publication in the statute book. HB 2198 would allow full-time law enforcement certified employees within KDWP's Law Enforcement, Parks, and Public Lands divisions to transition into KPF from the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System (KPERs). The provisions of the bill would make the effective date upon publication in the statute book. This change is necessary for the long-term health of the agency and will aid in recruitment and retention of these valuable public safety positions.

As the Committee is aware, KPF has slightly different retirement benefits that encourage transition out of law enforcement at an earlier age, protecting individual officers from being involved in physical confrontations at a later age, and we feel it is appropriate to add our officers into this system. KDWP law enforcement officers have the same statewide jurisdiction law enforcement certification as Kansas Highway Patrol officers and Kansas Bureau of Investigations agents, entities that are already in KPF. KDWP law enforcement officers routinely assist and work closely with other state law enforcement agencies and face the same daily dangers. Additionally, the KDWP is entirely fee funded and this transition will have no negative impact on State General Funds.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to testify and requests favorable consideration of the bill.