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Chairman Larry Powell
House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
Room 7083 DSOB
Topeka, KS 66612

Mr. Chairman,

March 16, 2011

On behalf of the National Rifle Association I would like to express my support for SB 152. This important legislation has been overlooked for sometime now and it is vitally important that we make a statutory change so that these two issues concerning the right to carry firearms while hunting and hunting with legally possessed firearm suppressors are made legal in Kansas.

The first aspect addressed in SB 152 would allow hunters to carry concealed handguns for self-defense while hunting. This is an option provided to hunters in many states throughout the country and these states have experienced no problems. There is no reason that sportsmen and women should be prohibited from choosing to legally carry a self-defense sidearm. One of the obvious examples of when this might serve as a life-saving measure is when a female bow hunter who is being stalked or harassed chooses to hunt. Under the current prohibition, she could be defenseless against an attack while in the field. Another example is protection from dangerous predators while bow hunting. There have been increasing numbers of cougars in Kansas and well as rabid coyotes. Hunters should be able to protect themselves from these animals while hunting and not be limited to the weapon they are licensed for.

The second proposal would allow hunters, who legally possess suppressors, to use those suppressors with their firearms while hunting. Many hunters would choose to use suppressors to protect against hearing loss, allow them the option of taking varmints while in the field without disturbing the primary game species they are pursuing, and also to help prevent noise complaints from neighbors and other land users. When the Kansas Legislature repealed the state prohibition on Title II firearms, there was considerable discussion as to the extensive background checks that individuals who choose to possess these firearms and suppressors must go through. These people are the most law-abiding in the country and have willingly agreed to be monitored by the federal government at all times. If they chose to hunt with a suppressor it would not be for reasons of poaching or hunting on lands without permission. It would simply be for the reasons previously stated regarding varmints and noise.

I would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to present testimony and would urge this committee to pass SB 152 favorably out of committee for consideration before the full House. Thank you for your time.

Jordan Austin
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NRA-ILA

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