



**Testimony on Senate Bill 120**  
presented to  
**Senate Natural Resources Committee**

By

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The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) appreciates this opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 120 for an exemption to K.S.A. 32-833 for the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) to purchase property greater than 320 acres without legislative approval if the purchase is for the Natural Resource Damage (NRD) Program.

The Secretary of the KDHE has been delegated by the Governor as the Natural Resource Trustee for the State. KDHE and US Fish and Wildlife, the federal trustee in Kansas, have been successful with NRD settlements with private industry. The restoration plan for many of the settlements is acquisition of land for preservation of native prairie or habitat improvement for the wildlife of Kansas.

The KDHE and KDWPT work jointly on these NRD restoration projects. KDHE prefers KDWPT involvement because they have the expertise to manage the property and it allows for public access, usage and enjoyment. It makes sense to foster public use of these properties since these projects are the direct result of KDHE representing the citizens of Kansas when making NRD claims.

The trustees have come close to losing a property acquisition due the current requirement for legislative approval because of the time it takes for that approval process to be completed. KDHE supports SB 120 because the source of the funding for these projects is from settlements with private companies. There is no state money used to acquire or manage these properties. With the passage of SB 120, KDWPT will be able to move quickly to acquisition when a willing property owner is identified.

Thank you for allowing me to explain the benefits of SB 120 for the NRD program. I will be happy to stand for any questions.