

Dear members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources.

My name is Jeff Vernon. I own 160 acres in Stafford County, Kansas.

I am in full support of HB 2207.

Under current law, State Statute 32-1013 Section C, the Kansas Department of Wildlife Parks & Tourism allows anyone who holds a hunting license the right to cross onto our property to pursue wounded wildlife. This can be used as a loophole for anyone to 'claim' they are in pursuit of wounded game and trespass on my property without any permission.

As a landowner, I alone should have the right to keep people off the land that I purchased, maintain, pay property taxes on, and pay insurance for. I have worked our land in order to improve our land for the purpose of establishing wildlife habitat.

I want to be a good neighbor and will work with my neighbors to pursue wounded game, but they need to get permission so we can verify whom they are and what the actual intent is.

If a hunter wounds a deer and it enters our lands, I want them to be able to find their kill. However, the ethical thing for the hunter to do is to contact the landowner for permission first. No landowner wants to find tracks and other signs of trespassers on their land. An ethical hunter will know the boundaries of where they have permission to hunt, and they should also have the contact numbers of the surrounding landowners. In the past I have had neighbors call me about tracking animals that have crossed the property line, and ask permission to pursue it. I have given permission and even assisted in the finding of the deer. The key is they asked first.

The KDWP&T through their walk in hunting program provides the landowner with liability insurance. However, through the current statute, they allow trespassers onto private property, but they do not extend the same liability insurance to those landowners. Over 97% of the land in Kansas is owned by private citizens, but the KDWP&T allows trespassers onto our lands without any liability insurance to the Kansas landowner.

Therefore, I ask for your support in ending this injustice, and please support HB 2207

Thank you,

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