

**To:** Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Senator Powell, Chairman

**From:** John Donley, Kansas Farm Bureau

**Date:** February 11, 2015

**Re:** **SB 120** – concerning wildlife, parks and tourism; relating to land purchases

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Chairman Powell and members of the Committee, Kansas Farm Bureau (KFB) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition of SB 120. My name is John Donley, and I am appearing today on behalf of KFB. KFB is the state's largest general farm organization representing more than 40,000 farm and ranch families through our 105 county Farm Bureau Associations.

SB 120 exempts the purchase of land by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism from legislative approval if such land is purchased utilizing natural resource damage and restoration funds.

Kansas Farm Bureau Policy CNR-5 states the following:

“We encourage the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) to fully explore the option of leasing land rather than purchasing any land.

We oppose the use of tax and fee revenues for the acquisition of any private land. **An economic impact study, a public hearing within the county where acquisition is proposed, and approval by the legislature should be required before the KDWPT is allowed to assume ownership of any land.** Any acquired property should remain on the property tax rolls. We are opposed to KDWPT having the authority to use the power of eminent domain.”

We understand that KDWPT would prefer to not have to acquire legislative approval for certain real estate purchases when no state funds would be utilized to make said purchases. However, the source of the funding is only a portion of the analysis that the legislature considers. The legislature should also consider whether it is good public policy for KDWPT to own a tract of real estate. **The state should not be in a position to compete against private citizens to purchase land without legislative approval regardless of the source of funds.**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. We encourage you to **vote no on SB 120** and continue to require the legislature to consider the policy implications of the government ownership of land. I would be happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.