



To: The Senate Natural Resources Committee
Senator Larry Powell, Chair

From: Bill Eastman
Chair of the Board
Ranchland Trust of Kansas

Re: Testimony in opposition to Senate Bill No. 425, legislation amending the Uniform
Conservation Easement Act

Date: February 18, 2016

The Ranchland Trust of Kansas (RTK) is a land trust affiliated with the Kansas Livestock Association (KLA), headquartered in Topeka, Kansas. In 2003, KLA leaders formed RTK as a separate entity and a charitable conservation organization, with a mission to preserve Kansas' ranching heritage and open spaces for future generations through the conservation of working landscapes. The use of voluntary perpetual conservation easements is the primary tool that RTK and cooperating landowners utilize to conserve working lands for future generations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in opposition to Senate Bill Number 425, concerning jurisdiction over conservation easements in the state of Kansas.

My name is Bill Eastman and I am testifying today as the Chair of the Board for the Ranchland Trust of Kansas. The Ranchland Trust of Kansas is a non-profit corporation whose purpose is to preserve Kansas' ranching heritage and open spaces through the conservation of working landscapes. My role as Board Chair is to insure that we accomplish this mission while adhering to values that are important to both Kansans and the people that have stewarded this land: sometimes for generations.

I, like many members of our voluntary Board, bring a passion for both the working and natural landscapes unique to Kansas and focus ourselves daily on preserving these landscapes guided by a commitment for conservation, respect for private land ownership, open collaboration and cooperation with all parties. We strive to do all of this with the highest level of integrity.

The Ranchland Trust of Kansas believes strongly that the current level of oversight, which can be overwhelming at times, is more than sufficient and additional governmental requirement would not add any value to the process.

I do appreciate this opportunity to testify and will be happy to stand for any questions you might have for me or the Ranchland Trust of Kansas.

Thank you