

HB 2268

Committee members:

As a life long Kansas resident and outdoorsman, we are at a turning point and ask for your support on this bill. Waterfowl hunting pressure on our limited, publicly available ground, both state and federal, has reached a tipping point. It can no longer support the number of people attempting to utilize it. Non -resident usage has increased to 50-75% usage on any given day. Its unsustainable and putting undue pressure on our resource and contributing to a decline in resident usage, causing some to hang it up completely. My younger son has all but given up waterfowl hunting in Kansas due to the pressure and tactics he's witnessed, primarily by the non-resident faction. Young people quitting hunting does not bode well for our state or the natural resources using our areas.

We are not against non-resident waterfowlers coming to Kansas to enjoy our opportunities, there just needs to be some controls put in place and this bill does a good job in addressing that need. I, myself, travel out of state to waterfowl hunt and frankly, I'm going more and more to other states as I can enjoy a better experience in states that already have non-resident restrictions in place. Those are dollars that Kansas is losing out on. In our general area, Missouri, Arkansas, North Dakota, South Dakota, Colorado and Wyoming all utilize some form or another of non-resident restrictions. I find these restrictions easy to navigate and believe they lead to a better experience day in and day out.

The issue of money is always a concern on these particular matters. Non-residents like to argue they keep towns and businesses afloat with their hunting dollars. This is simply not accurate. Great Bend and Hoisington did not up and vanish when Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area was dry or nearly dry the past 3 seasons and experienced virtually zero non-resident usage. This is just one example. I think one should keep in mind the amount of money lost to the state by resident hunters that are either giving it up or not traveling in state. I used to make 5-10 trips a year to various areas of the state. I no longer do this. The pressure and experience have become too negative. Many nights of hotels, gasoline and restaurant dollars are lost to the state from a resident. I have several friends who are doing the same.

As Kansas residents we live, spend, contribute and pay taxes all year long in our communities, not just for a week or so on a hunting trip. Please consider moving this bill forward for the good of our natural resources.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss this issue in greater depth. Thank you for your time.

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