



January 25th, 2016

Honorable Janice Pauls
Chairman, House Committee on Federal and State Affairs
Kansas House of Representatives
300 SW 10th St.
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Chairman Pauls,

I am pleased to write you today to express the support of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) for House Concurrent Resolution 5008 (HCR 5008). This constitutional amendment, as proposed, would guarantee the rights of Kansans to hunt, fish and trap wildlife by traditional methods. The NWTF recognizes the positive economic impact sportsmen and women have on the conservation of natural resources in the state of Kansas. We also understand the need for sound, scientific management of fish and wildlife populations. We are a strong proponent of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, which includes the "public trust doctrine," dictating that all wildlife resources belong to the public. With this comes the responsibility to pay for the management of these wildlife resources. Sportsmen and women have continually answered the call to fund this management through license purchases and by paying federal excise taxes on sporting arms and ammunition and other taxable gear, fueling the "user-pays for public benefits" model.

We understand there might be some who say there is no need for such a constitutional amendment to protect these activities because Kansas has such a strong tradition of hunting, trapping and fishing. Unfortunately, we do not have to look far to see examples where sporting traditions have been challenged, calling into question the management ability and authority of state agencies to manage their fish and wildlife resources. Hunting and fishing are woven into the fabric of the citizens of the state of Kansas and they annually support these activities through their expenditures in pursuit of them. According to the U.S Fish & Wildlife Service, through their 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife Associated Recreation, 527,000 residents and non-residents participated in hunting and fishing across Kansas, spending \$629 million in pursuit of these outdoor activities, supporting local jobs and providing \$69 million in state and local taxes.

We urge the Committee to accept HCR 5008, thus allowing the people of Kansas the opportunity to weigh in on the future of fishing, hunting and wildlife conservation for future generations of Kansans. If you have any questions about the NWTF's position on this issue, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at any time. Thank you for the opportunity to comment and voice our support.

Sincerely,

Vance Ralstin
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