

**Testimony on HB 2098 regarding naming the Bison Herd in Cherokee County
To
The House Committee on Agriculture**

**By Christopher Tymeson
Chief Legal Counsel
Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism**

26 January 2017

HB 2098 would name the bison herd at the Mined Land Wildlife Area in Crawford County after former Kansas House of Representatives member Bob Grant. **The Department supports HB 2098.** The act would be effective upon publication in the statute book.

Former Representative Bob Grant was a tireless champion of the Department's bison herd in southeast Kansas and there are few things more fitting for permanently memorializing Representative Grant.

By way of background for the Committee, the Department owns three bison herds. Visitors come from all over the United States to see the herds. One is located at the Sandsage Bison Range in southwest Kansas near Garden City, established in 1924. The second is located in central Kansas, at the Maxwell Wildlife Refuge near Canton, established in 1943. And the third is located in southeast Kansas at the Mined Land Wildlife Area, established in 1928, and is the reason we are here today.

The MLWA herd is the smallest of the Department's herds at 5 animals but is an important and interwoven part of the local community fabric. Currently, the herd is located in Cherokee County as the Department refurbishes the bison pen and establishes native grasses. The Department would phase in signage and publications as they are needed so costs from the bill would be minimal.

The Department appreciates the support of the Committee in passing HB 2547 and the opportunity to address the Committee.