



**To: Honorable Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee**

State Capitol  
300 SW 10<sup>th</sup> St.  
Topeka, KS 66612

**Re: SB 145 – Authorizing the Kansas department of wildlife, parks and tourism to purchase land in Kingman county.**

**Position: Support**

**Date: March 15, 2021**

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Honorable Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee:

On behalf of the Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation (CSF), I ask that you support Senate Bill 145 (SB 145), a bill that would allow for the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism (KDWPT) to purchase a tract of land in Kingman County, KS. We request that this letter be included as part of the public hearing record.

Since 1989, CSF has maintained a singleness of purpose that has guided the organization to become the most respected and trusted sportsmen's organization in the political arena. CSF's mission is to work with Congress, governors, and state legislatures to protect and advance hunting, angling, recreational shooting and trapping. The unique and collective force of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, the Governors Sportsmen's Caucus, and the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses, working closely with CSF, and with the support of major hunting, recreational fishing and shooting, and trapping organizations, serves as an unprecedented network of pro-sportsmen elected officials that advance the interests of America's hunters and anglers.

In 2020, hunting and fishing in Kansas – whether enjoyed on public or private lands – generated more than \$48 million in crucial funding for conservation practices through the American System of Conservation Funding (ASCF). This “user pays-public benefits” structure relies on the purchase of hunting and fishing licenses, along with revenue from self-imposed excise taxes on items like firearms, ammunition, fishing tackle and motorboat fuel, to provide the primary funding for state fish and wildlife management agencies, including the KDWPT. These activities also contribute

tremendously to the Kansas economy. According to reports published by the American Sportfishing Association and the National Shooting Sports Foundation, Kansas' 527,000 hunters and anglers spend \$629 million annually, supporting more than 9,000 jobs while engaging in their outdoor pursuits. However, declining participation in these activities threatens the continued success of the ASCF and many rural economies that benefit from tourism revenue provided by sportsmen and women.

Though many hunters and anglers do have access to private lands, surveys conducted by Responsive Management reported that 46% of hunters cited a lack of access as taking away from their enjoyment of hunting and influencing their decision not to hunt. This lack of access creates a barrier to participation that has clear economic and sociological implications. By providing public access opportunities close to a relatively densely populated areas like Wichita, KDWP, along with hunting and fishing conservation organizations, will have an opportunity to host programs to recruit new hunters and anglers.

Finally, it is also important to acknowledge that all lands purchased or acquired by KDWP are obtained from willing landowners and partner organizations. These landowners have made the choice to sell or donate their property to KDWP often in order to benefit wildlife conservation and public access in Kansas. By allowing KDWP to take advantage of one such opportunity in Kingman County, you are helping further their goal of providing opportunities to those who do not have the luxury of participating in hunting or fishing on tracts of private property.

In conclusion, CSF asks the Committee to support SB 145 and allow KDWP to acquire this property to manage for the benefit of all Kansas. If you have questions or would like any additional information, please feel free to contact me using the information below.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kent Keene". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Kent Keene**

Senior Coordinator, Lower Midwestern States and Agriculture Policy

Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation

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