



KansasRifle.org

KANSAS STATE RIFLE ASSOCIATION

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Chairman Corbet and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2582. We believe this bill is a move in the right direction for Kansas sportsmen and women.

Arguments have been raised that we should be cautious about legislation that might complicate the appointment process for wildlife and parks commissioners. Let me point out that our entire form of government is based on the principle that complicating processes can be a good thing when done properly. Efficient tyranny is the enemy of freedom, and a well-structured series of checks and balances removes power from any one political figure or office, more effectively protecting our citizens from both blatant consolidation of power and the far more common tendency of human nature to gradually accumulate influence or control.

While it may be tempting to think that having a non-elected body as insulated from the political process as possible when making decisions about Kansas wildlife is an ideal scenario, that's neither reality nor in line with the principle of accountability to voters that we all hold dear. A balance of power and broader accountability will better represent and protect future generations of Kansans than even the best of intentions of any future Governor and their staff.

And while it has been pointed out that a balance in party representation is already required in statute, we all know how easy it is to find members of different political party registrations who more or less agree on all or nearly all political positions. Many of us have personally seen Governors of both parties appoint members of the opposite party who more closely align with them. A requirement, therefore, that appointees be from different parties rings rather hollow. A simple party label requirement is no guarantee of political or ideological diversity whereas broadening the appointment power across multiple offices makes these positions more likely to represent Kansas as a whole.

Commissioners should absolutely be appointed based on their professional and personal experience in the fields being regulated. When appointment authority is spread across more than one political office and our state is no longer relying on the recommendations of a single office of appointments, we are more likely to end up with a complementary variety of experience in the field. We owe it to the next generation of sportsmen and women to ensure that future appointees are as attune as possible to the needs of hunters, anglers, trappers, property owners, and others whose lives and livelihoods hinge on the decisions being made.

A strong system of checks and balances is required for government to stay limited from one generation to the next. And while it may be impossible to arrive at a perfect makeup of any commission, we believe broadening and diversifying appointment power gives our state the best chance of protecting our cherished right to hunt, fish, and trap, as well as our state's incredible natural resources, regardless of any political winds we may experience in the future.

Sincerely,
Moriah

MORIAH DAY
Executive Director
[Kansas State Rifle Association](http://KansasStateRifleAssociation.org)