

## TESTIMONY

To the Special Committee on the 30x30 Federal Initiative

Kent Glasscock

Speaker of the Kansas House of Representatives, 2001-2003

Wednesday, December 8, 2021

Chairperson Rahjes, Vice Chair Kerschen and Members of the Committee:

As a Republican and former member of the Kansas House of Representatives, I have always understood the need for limited government and the ability for individuals to craft their own destiny without governmental interference.

If Freedom's Frontier was a part of an effort to remove property owner rights, I would not have spent years on its governing board. My family has owned land in Kansas and Missouri for decades-- and I would not have supported a program that would put my land - or anyone's land – in jeopardy.

When President Ronald Reagan started heritage areas in 1984 – he started them as an alternative to National Parks where the land does become federal property. Despite what you may have heard, National Heritage Areas have always been a bipartisan program. Republicans and Democrats working together to preserve the history and heritage of our country. Legislation establishing Freedom's Frontier was signed into law by President George W. Bush. The last five heritage areas were enacted by President Donald Trump.

Reagan, Bush, Trump. Not a land grabber in the bunch.

Those who established Freedom's Frontier Heritage Area wrote the law to specifically give landowners a choice: they can be involved or not. No landowner can be forced to join – and any landowner who chooses to join, can get out at any time.

I support Freedom's Frontier because it recognizes the important role that Kansas and Missouri played in the years before and after the years of the Civil War – all while bringing tourism dollars into our smallest towns and most rural areas. Freedom's Frontier successfully brings benefits to Kansas at no cost to the state, its counties and cities or landowner partners.

I know there has been quite a bit of misinformation about Freedom's Frontier.

Here are the facts. Freedom's Frontier is statutorily PROHIBITED from:

- Owning property
- Interfering in any way with,
  - Private property rights
  - Water rights
  - Hunting and fishing
  - Any city, county, state, or federal law – including zoning

Simply stated, Freedom's Frontier can do nothing on its own. If it were a tiger, it would be a toothless tiger, scaring no one.

In April, 1861, the Union was breaking apart, southern states were leaving the shared governance of our country. Many believed concessions to and placation of these slave holding states was the answer. This, they felt, would save the Union.

The first Governor of Kansas, Charles Robinson in a message to the legislature had a different answer.

*"A demand is made by certain States, that new concessions and new guaranties be made to Slavery, or the Union must be destroyed.*

*If it is true that the continued existence of Slavery requires the destruction of the Union, it is time to ask if the existence of the Union does not require the destruction of Slavery."*

Kansas was America's frontier of freedom in 1861. It still is. Let Freedom's Frontier continue to embrace and remember our state's rich history. This organization is a threat to no one...except those who would forget our heritage of freedom.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to talk with you and the committee today.