

SESSION OF 2024

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2582

As Amended by House Committee on
Agriculture and Natural Resources Budget

Brief*

HB 2582, as amended, would increase the membership of the Kansas Wildlife and Parks Commission (Commission) from seven to nine members and change the appointing authority for various members of the Commission. Currently, the Governor appoints all seven members of the Commission, with a maximum of four members from the same political party.

The bill would authorize the following appointing authority:

- Three members would be appointed by the Governor;
- Two members would be appointed by the Speaker of the House;
- Two members would be appointed by the President of the Senate; and
- Two members would be appointed by the Attorney General.

Additionally, the bill would specify that no more than two members of the Commission could be residents of the same fish and wildlife administration region and that at least one member of the Commission would be from each of the fish and wildlife administration regions.

*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.kslegislature.org>

The bill would state that in the appointment of members of the Commission, each respective appointing authority would be required to give consideration to only residents who:

- Within the previous five years, obtained a fishing or hunting license, permit, stamp, or other issue of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP); or
- Possess a lifetime fishing, hunting, furharvester, or combination hunting and fishing license.

Background

The bill was introduced by the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources Budget at the request of Representative Corbet.

House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources Budget

In the House Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by representatives of Hunter Nation, Kansas Outfitters and Landowners Association, and Kansas State Rifle Association, a former Commission member, and several private citizens. The proponents generally stated that increasing membership would be beneficial because it would increase the possibility of having commissioners with different points of view. The proponents also stated having more commissioners, along with requiring different appointing authorities and different geographic locations of those commissioners, will create a more representative sample of Kansas as a whole.

Opponent testimony was provided by the Secretary of Wildlife and Parks. The Secretary stated the current role of the Commission is to provide a public forum for feedback on potential rules and regulations and to serve in an advisory

capacity to the Secretary and Governor in formulating policies and plans relating to the KDWP.

Written-only opponent testimony was provided by a representative of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers and Audubon of Kansas.

Neutral testimony was provided by a representative of The Nature Conservancy and a private citizen, who generally stated indifference on the bill and outlined that experience or education should be considered when making appointments to the Commission.

The House Committee amended the bill to:

- Specify that no more than two members of the Commission could be residents of the same fish and wildlife administration region;
- Further specify that at least one member of the Commission could be from each of the fish and wildlife administration regions; and
- Consider only residents who have obtained a license, permit, stamp, or other issue from the KDWP in the last five years or have obtained a lifetime license.

Fiscal Information

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget on the bill, as introduced, the KDWP estimates enactment of the bill would increase KDWP expenditures. According to KDWP, the Commission meets no less than seven times each year, and when considering per diem compensation for each commissioner, per diem subsistence, mileage claimed, and hotel stays, the total cost to KDWP is estimated to be \$4,758 for FY 2025 and \$4,925 for FY 2026. KDWP estimates additional expenditures could be absorbed

within existing resources. The Office of the Attorney General and the Legislature both state the bill would have no fiscal effect.

Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks; Kansas Wildlife and Parks Commission; commission membership