

House Committee on Agriculture

RE: SB331 - Designating Flint Hills trail state park and Little Jerusalem Badlands state park as part of the state park system

March 7, 2018
Topeka, KS

Presented by: Vince Rocco
McPherson County

Chairman Hoffman and Members of the Committee, I would like to take this time to express the opposition of myself and my wife to Senate Bill 331.

We are opposed to the this bill for the following.

We feel that this is a way for trail groups to start trails then abandon the projects and their responsibilities and make the State take them on to finish and maintain them. This puts the cost burden of completion, operation and maintenance onto the State.

These trails are on private property that should have reverted back to the adjoining landowners. The act of railbanking and trail use instead of abandonment prevents reversion of the right-of-way interest per State Statute.

We also have concern for the personal safety of the families that live along these trails, since they are not closed-off at night and are in remote, unsupervised areas that can difficult for law enforcement and other first responders to access.

These trails bisect and divide farm ground and pastures. For farms divided by a trail Ag equipment and livestock must be crossed over the trail. This presents an additional burden for the producer and takes the acreage covered by the trail right-of-way out of useful production and the tax base.