

Opponent to Bill 2167

Speaker: Gaines Slade

- I am resident of Texas and live in San Antonio with over a decade straight of coming to Kansas to hunt and film whitetail deer hunts in multiple counties. I am also an outfitter here in Kansas, hosting paying non residents on fully guided deer and turkey hunts. I flew to K.C., rented a car, and stayed the night in Topeka just to speak against bill 2167.
- A brief word on my background. I have spent well over 1000 days filming whitetail hunts for a multitude of established outdoor TV shows in 26 states, 4 Canadian Provinces and Old Mexico. I also have a decade's worth of experience booking and consulting clients and TV shows on the best states, counties, and outfitters to pursue top end whitetail. I was GM of Tecomate Wildlife Seed for 4 years and during that time I consulted with hundreds of landowners on land management best practices to produce the best deer on their property around the country. Lastly, I run an outfitting business in SE Kansas which caters to trophy whitetail hunters and turkey hunters that come from all over the United States.
- There is an avalanche of solid facts that consistently point out the litany of problems with this bill and why it's unnecessary. I am choosing to focus on the flawed reasoning for the bill in the first place.
- Kansas is the Ferrari of whitetail deer hunting. Through forward thinking legislation and regulations, hard work from KDWPT, and the grace of the good Lord; Kansas has the perfect formula to be the pinnacle. The order is simple. AGE... Nutrition.... Genetics Don't rock the boat or change the course for a bill that risks your highly sought after resource and will subsequently put next to nothing in your constituents pockets. Remember anything rare is valuable and world class deer are extremely rare. Don't squander the resource your state has so strategically produced.
- Rep. Corbet is quoted as saying "The farmers would like to have a chance to get in on the situation. Basically, all they're asking on this deal is a chance to be a player." This statement is the foundation of this vague bill. It can only be taken to mean 1 of 2 things. The farmers want to be outfitters. Great, have at it! There is not one thing in place stopping any land owner from being an outfitter. The state wide non resident deer draw success is 97%! The only thing stopping any Kansas landowner or non-landowner from being an outfitter is the harsh realization that Outfitting for deer is an extremely small business, requiring tons of man days, land accumulation, and outlay of money. The only other thing Rep. Corbet comment could mean is that the landowners want in on a cut of the tag money generated by nonresidents. Again, this is a baseless statement. To what end? How much could they possibly make, a few hundred dollars

for the one landowner tag? The price they can get is basically capped by the fact that the normal draw is basically a 100% draw success. Lastly, the landowners already have their financial seat at the table in the form of ultra-high demand to lease their ground by nonresidents. That is the resident landowner's seat at the table and it applies to both 80 and above or 80 acre and below. The willingness to pay absurd per acre prices by nonresidents will evaporate the minute the big deer do.

- The other major point from the proponent side is the old tried and true "deer strike" argument. Here is why that doesn't tote water around the corner. Those deer strike stats are easily manipulated to fit whatever agenda someone wants to push. You constantly here deer strikes are increasing, but those stats never compensate for increase in human population in Kansas thus more drivers. More drivers = more cars on the road= more hit deer. Car strikes are in no way an accurate indication in needing to implement more ANTLERED deer permits to threaten the exact reason people flock to Kansas and spend big money. If you are really worried about this, turn loose more female deer tags in certain areas, but the reality is that already exists. 12 of the 19 units in Kansas allow for 5 additional antlerless deer permits per person to be purchased, so there is really no excuse. In the end, every state I follow closely uses the "deer strike" interchangeable numbers anytime they are trying to increase deer harvest regulations. It is not one size fits all. In the end, 4500 estimated ANTLERED tags would do nothing to move the car strike stats. But it would be extremely negative to the perception and reality of Kansas as being THE trophy whitetail destination for travel hunters. The main reason is two fold. Number one this is opening pandoras box, you are at the pinnacle, leave it alone. Secondly, those 4500 ANTLERED tags are hyper targeted at the top of the deer herd which is a sensitive balance. Those 4500 ANTLERED tags would be in the hands of non – resident trophy hunters, looking to harvest a resource that exists on a knives edge. With 18 deer units that would be 250 additional ANTLERED tag hunters. In some units that would represent a 30% increase of non resident tags. The top end deer population can NOT endure that.
- You open this box and the top will be shot off your deer herd, your reputation as the premiere whitetail destination state will quickly evaporate (especially in this day and age of social media and such a small world), your resident landowners real asset of high per acre rent value will plummet, and Kansas will look up real quick to find its just a pedestrian deer state. All this risked with the idea that landowners are going to sell a landowner tag or two a year for a couple hundred bucks. It will cost your landowners in deer lease rent way more in the long run than they will ever make hypothetically selling landowner tags for a capped few hundred dollars.
- Thank you for your time!