

February 13, 2018

Reference: HB 2743

Proponent of Landowner Transferable Tag

Dear Distinguished Committee Members,

My family has operated a full-time hunting business in Kansas for over 20 years. We currently have camps in Crawford, Rice, and Reno Counties. Our office is in Mulberry, Kansas. I am also the President of the Kansas Outfitters' Association

We currently have business relationships with 35 Kansas landowners who own approximately 25,000 acres. These 35 Kansas landowners receive over \$116,000 in lease payments for the use of their land. These lease payments are only paid if hunters are willing and able to hunt on the land through our business.

In 2016, we had 8 men not draw deer tags. Six men were regular weekly hunters resulting in approximately \$24,000 business loss, but 2 men were our Elite hunters paying \$12,000 each for their hunts. This was a grand total of \$48,000 in business loss due to not drawing 8 deer tags. I can assure you, based on the number of deer my clients report to have seen daily and the statistics that I have kept over the years of being in business, that the Kansas Whitetail population can very easily support the demand for the tags that were not filled.

The Kansas Outfitters' Association and the landowners that we partner with support this bill because it will act as a "back up plan" to ensure that we can provide hunts for clients who want to purchase Kansas hunts and provide revenue for our business/landowner partnership and ultimately the state of Kansas.

This bill would provide a much-needed option for landowners to be able to transfer their “hunt your own land tags” to the clients who do not draw a tag. It is clearly a win/win situation for all involved; outfitters continue to provide excellent tourism opportunities to clients, landowners continue to receive payments for their leased land, and the state sees an increase in revenue. Furthermore, for those who fear that increasing tags would put the deer population in jeopardy (which I clearly disagree with), this option does not increase the number of tags issued; it simply allows the landowners to transfer their tags that are already available. Everyone wins.

Thank you for your consideration,

Keaton Kelso
K&K Outfitters
President, Kansas Outfitters’ Association