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To: House Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development
Representative Sean Tarwater, Chair

From: Dean Klahr, Director of Stockgrowers Division

Re: **HB 2331, AN ACT concerning wildlife; relating to certain duties of the secretary of wildlife, parks and tourism; providing for the transferability of deer permits to nonresidents.**

Date: February 22, 2021

The Kansas Livestock Association (KLA), formed in 1894, is a trade association representing over 5,700 members on legislative and regulatory issues. KLA members are involved in many aspects of the livestock industry, including seedstock, cow-calf and stocker production, cattle feeding, dairy production, grazing land management and diversified farming operations.

The Kansas Livestock Association (KLA) supports HB 2331 because the bill provides for the transfer of "landowner or tenant hunt-on-your-own-land" whitetail deer hunting permits. Key provisions of the bill include:

- The person who receives the transferred permit would be restricted to hunting on the land designated by the landowner/tenant when he/she purchases the hunt-on-your-own-land permit.
- Transfers shall not occur in a management unit unless all nonresident deer hunting permits have been filled in the management unit where the landowner wishes to make a transfer of their permit.
- A resident who has previously purchased a deer hunting permit and nonresidents who are successful in the drawing for nonresident permits are not eligible to receive a transferable permit.
- KDWP would be allowed to charge a transfer fee, not to exceed half the cost of a nonresident hunting permit for either sex of whitetail deer or not to exceed the original permit cost charged to landowner/tenant hunt-on-your-own land if the transferred permit is limited to antlerless deer.

If adopted, these changes would provide an additional opportunity to facilitate a fee hunting experience and/or an opportunity to provide a hunting experience to

nonresident friends and relatives who missed the deadline for application or were unsuccessful in securing a permit in the nonresident draw.

Why does KLA have an interest in deer hunting and in HB 2331 specifically? I'm often reminded that farmers and ranchers are not just producers of grain, forage and livestock. If you think about it, they are also managers of the natural resources on privately owned lands. These producers are also entrepreneurs and it's only natural for them to consider alternative and/or unconventional opportunities to generate income that's sustainable and compatible with their existing operation.

You will hear or read testimony from agricultural producers with experiences in fee hunting. It is not unusual for a Kansas farm or ranch family to rely on recreational services as an added, and important income stream for their operation. In fact, fee hunting has provided an opportunity for the next generation of farmers and ranchers to return home (in rural Kansas) and integrate into their multi-generational operation.

What is limiting or impeding this opportunity for deer hunting in Kansas? The most demand for fee hunting is from nonresidents and currently the only way for these hunters to secure a deer hunting permit is through a drawing. The deadline for nonresidents to apply for a deer hunting permit for the 2021 season is April 30, 2021. This deadline is well in advance of this fall's season. It's difficult for a prospective nonresident deer hunter and a Kansas guide or outfitter (including farmers and ranchers) to make arrangements for a hunt if the prospective hunter must apply 4-7 months in advance and when there is so much uncertainty about the availability of a permit.

At one time Kansas law allowed landowners and tenants to obtain transferable deer hunting permits and transfer or sell these permits to anyone for use on their property or anywhere within the management unit. KDWP was successful in convincing the landowner community and the legislature to repeal this law as they were committed to increasing the allotment of nonresident hunting permits to a level that would meet or exceed demand from nonresidents. This change, for the most part, met this objective. In recent years, however, we have received feedback that guides and outfitters are having to turn away business because of the current nonresident permit system.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit KLA's views to the Committee. KLA asks the Committee to approve HB 2331 favorably for passage.