

UPDATED
SESSION OF 2023

**SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON SENATE CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION NO. 1602**

As Adopted by the Senate

Brief*

SCR 1602 would state the Kansas Legislature disapproves the designation of the lesser prairie chicken as a threatened species in Kansas by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

The concurrent resolution would also state the Kansas Legislature supports the passage in Congress of Senate Joint Resolution 70 and House Joint Resolution 105 that would return control to the farmers, ranchers, and energy producers of Kansas.

[*Note:* Senate Joint Resolution 70 is co-sponsored by U.S. Senators Marshall and Moran; House Joint Resolution 105 is co-sponsored by U.S. Representatives Estes, LaTurner, and Mann. The resolutions would nullify a November 2022 final rule of the USFWS regarding the status of the lesser prairie chicken.]

Background

The concurrent resolution was introduced by Senator Kerschen and 27 others.

*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>

Senate Action

On January 23, 2023, the Senate adopted the concurrent resolution without roll call.

House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

In the House Committee hearing on February 6, 2023, the Small Game Coordinator, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, provided informational testimony on the lesser prairie chicken, including its population, habitat, and previous listings by the USFWS.

Proponent testimony was provided by representatives of the Kansas Farm Bureau, Kansas Independent Oil and Gas Association, and Kansas Livestock Association, who stated that farmers and ranchers are the best stewards of their land, and the population of the lesser prairie chicken is a reflection of the current drought conditions in western Kansas.

Opponent testimony was provided by a representative of the Sierra Club, who stated the lesser prairie chicken is an iconic species of the short grass prairie and its decline reflects the loss of habitat to farming, urban development, and oil and gas extraction activities. Written-only opponent testimony was provided by a member of the public.

Neutral testimony was provided by a representative of The Nature Conservancy, who stated that a voluntary, incentivized conservation approach is the most important way to achieve conservation of the lesser prairie chicken.

Lesser prairie chicken; threatened species; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service