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**Testimony on HB 2729 relating to the Implementation of the Kansas State Park Pass Program
To
The Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee**

**By Robin Jennison
Secretary
Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism**

April 26, 2012

HB 2729 seeks to implement a new Kansas State Park Pass purchase program. The bill would be effective January 1, 2013. **The Department supports the provisions contained in the bill.**

Upon implementation, the Kansas State Park Pass would allow for the voluntary annual purchase of the Kansas State Park Pass at a rate of \$15 until such time as the amount for such permit is changed by rules and regulations of the Secretary of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism. Annual motor vehicle permits will continue to be available for purchase over the counter by non-residents and those choosing not to participate in the Kansas State Park Pass program at a rate of \$22.50 plus appropriate administrative fees.

This bill is largely designed to provide Kansas citizens with more convenient access to our state park system by allowing the purchase of the park pass at the time of their annual vehicle registration renewal. Revenue generated from this program would be used to make our state parks more self-sufficient and reduce the impact of weather, blue green algae and other natural occurrences on revenues generated during major park weekends.

Kansas Department of Wildlife, Park and Tourism has sought and received the support of this program by the Secretary of Revenue and his staff. Prior to the drafting the proposal, the Department also sought the feedback on this program by the Association of County Treasurers.

In summary, the Department appreciates the support of the Committee in passage of the bill.

Talking Points – KS State Park Pass Program

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) is asking the Kansas Legislature to consider implementing a Kansas State Park Pass program. This program would enable citizens of Kansas to purchase their annual Kansas State Park “Easy” Pass when renewing their annual vehicle registration renewal.

Currently, an annual or daily vehicle permit is required to enter a Kansas state park.

Today our system is often considered cumbersome & intimidating. It discourages many “would be” customers from experiencing our state parks. Holiday weekends often result in lines in excess of 1 mile long to access our larger parks.

Currently, the daily permit is \$4.20 during prime season (April-September) and \$3.70 October-March. An annual vehicle permit is \$24.70 if purchased April-September and \$19.70 if purchased October-March. Annual permits are valid through the calendar year. (Note: These rates include \$1.50/\$2.50 vendor administration fees respectively.)

The Annual Park Pass would be a voluntary purchase of \$15 at the time of vehicle registration renewal, good for one year from time of purchase. It would be available to residents only. County Treasurers have been consulted and have agreed to cooperate. In return, the agency has included the potential for the county treasurer to charge an additional fee to the customer of no more than \$0.50 for administrative inconvenience.

That is a savings of \$9, including issuance fees to the current prime time permit fee.

To encourage the Park Pass purchase, the “over-the-counter” annual permit would be increased to \$22.50 (\$25 with fees), and daily entrance permit fee increased to \$3.50 (\$5 with fees) (Note: These administration fees are vendor fees).

Since 2007, there has been a 55.5% decrease in state funding of our Kansas State Parks. Limited capital improvement has been approved by our state since 2003.

Michigan has a similar program, and 27 percent of vehicle registrations included the pass the first year it was offered.

If ten percent of Kansas passenger vehicle registrations opted for the Park Pass, revenues would be approximately \$3,400,000, a significant increase over current vehicle entrance permit revenues.

Revenue generated from this program would be used in an effort to make our state parks more self-sufficient and reduce the impact of weather, blue green algae and other natural occurrences on revenues generated during major park weekends.

More importantly, increased revenue could provide our management team the opportunity to create a vision for our parks that responds to customer needs and market demands rather than operating merely in survival mode....This allows us to set the tone for an enhanced visitor experience:

- Programmed activities for children and adults to engage the visitor in a "Nature Experience"
- Cleaner more manicured/maintained facilities
- Enhanced customer service

During the first year of operation, KDWPT will offer pro-rata refunds to those requesting and providing proof of purchase of both the Kansas State Park "Easy" Pass and the traditional annual vehicle permit.

This recommendation has been discussed with members of the Department of Revenue team including Secretary Jordan, Deb Wiley – Manager, Titles and Registrations & Donna Shelite, Director of Vehicles. When asked about concerns with this proposal, they indicated that there were some large counties that expressed concern about an increased work load, *(but that the Association of County Treasurers have agreed to back the bill & pledge their support in the implementation process.)*

Initiatives such as a Park Perks program will be utilized in the future to encourage participation by non-park users, serving as an economic driver for participating businesses & communities.

Several states have considered, and some have adopted, a similar program for their state parks:

State	Effective Date	Approach	Fee	Equivalent to a vehicle permit?	Participation Rate
Montana	2004	Opt-Out	\$4	Yes (previously no fee)	2010: 80%
Michigan	Oct. 2010	Opt-in	\$10	Yes (previously \$24)	27%
Washington	Sept 2009	Opt-out	\$30	Yes (previously no fee)	2010: 40%; 2011: significantly less, but would not provide information
Minnesota	Current legislative proposal	Mandatory	\$6	Yes	100% No opt out option

Total "Realistic" Revenue Potential – Light Truck & Car Registrations

As of 2/8/201 per DMV - KDOR	100%	10%	15%	20%	25%
Total Cars	1,683,282	168,328.2	252,492.3	336,656.4	420,820.5
Total Light Trucks (under 12k #)	619,477	61,947.7	92,921.55	123,895.4	154,869.25
Total Motorized RV's	10,917	1,091.7	1,637.55	2,183.4	2,729.25
Total	2,313,676	231,367.6	347,051.4	462,735.2	578,419
Rate	\$ 15.00	\$ 15.00	\$ 15.00	\$ 15.00	\$ 15.00
Revenue potential	\$ 34,705,140.00	\$ 3,470,514.00	\$ 5,205,771.00	\$ 6,941,028.00	\$ 8,676,285.00

Rate Comparison

	Current			Proposed	
	Jan 1 - March 31	April 1 - Dec 31	Fee	Annual	Fee
Annual Park Pass	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 15.00	\$ 0.50
Annual Vehicle Permit	\$ 17.20	\$ 22.20	\$ 2.50	\$ 22.50	\$ 2.50
Sr. Annual Permit	\$ 8.60	\$ 11.10	\$ 2.50	\$ 22.50	\$ 2.50
Daily Vehicle Permit	\$ 2.70	\$ 2.70	\$ 1.50	\$ 3.50	\$ 1.50
Sr. Daily Permit	\$ 1.35	\$ 1.35	\$ 1.50	\$ 3.50	\$ 1.50

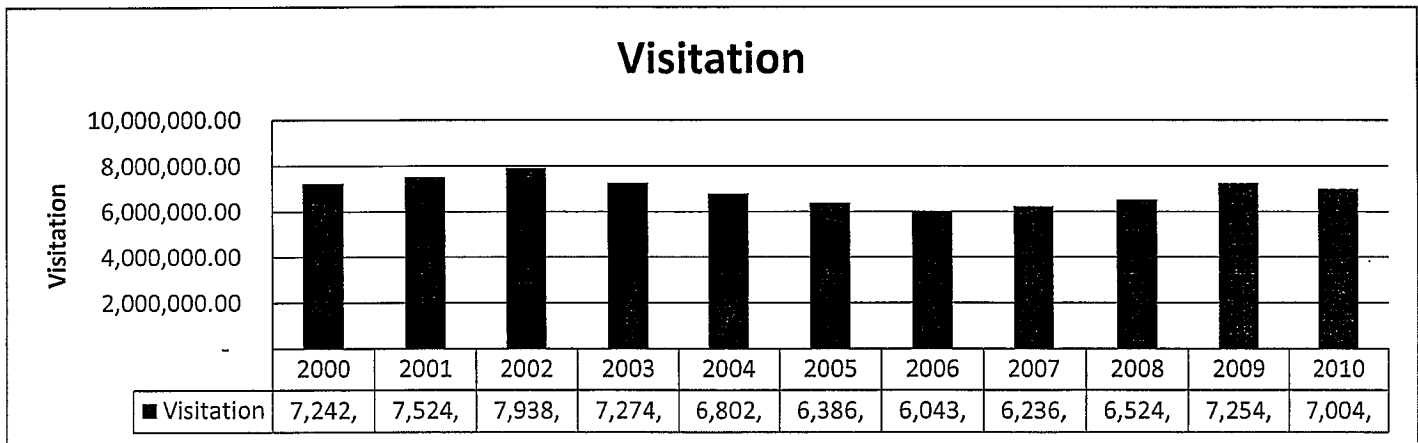
Historical Revenue

	Total Dept. SGF	Parks Portion of SGF	Annual Permit Sales	Daily Permit Sales
2007	\$ 9,053,444.00	\$ 6,581,246.00	\$ 1,402,979.50	\$ 624,614.60
2008	\$ 10,724,154.00	\$ 6,428,040.00	\$ 915,300.30	\$ 597,710.05
2009	\$ 8,204,229.00	\$ 6,371,197.00	\$ 1,011,076.90	\$ 733,315.49
2010	\$ 5,438,265.00	\$ 3,478,824.00	\$ 1,022,391.50	\$ 733,211.00
2011	\$ 5,015,657.00	\$ 2,925,529.00	\$ 1,011,641.10	\$ 671,210.42

Historical Annual/Daily Permit Sales

	Annual Vehicle	SR/Dis Annual Veh	Second Veh	SR/Dis 2nd Veh	Total Annual Permits	Daily Vehicle	SR/Dis Daily Veh	Total Daily Permits
2007	35,133	7,980	12,300	4,049	59,462	228,598	13,170	241,768
2007	\$703,387.60	\$75,291.60	\$134,707.50	\$21,223.90	\$ 934,610.60	\$607,144.10	\$17,470.50	\$ 624,614.60
2008	34,335	7,816	12,706	4,027	58,884	220,381	9,876	230,257
2008	\$698,482.00	\$75,317.60	\$141,500.70	\$21,362.20	\$ 936,662.50	\$584,709.70	\$13,000.35	\$ 597,710.05
2009	38,099	8,475	13,553	4,420	64,547	227,819	7,349	235,168
2009	\$777,652.80	\$81,605.00	\$151,819.10	\$23,413.25	\$ 1,034,490.15	\$720,453.55	\$12,861.94	\$ 733,315.49
2010	38,367	8,642	13,857	4,597	65,463	226,780	7,709	234,489
2010	\$784,417.40	\$83,496.20	\$154,477.90	\$24,389.20	\$ 1,046,780.70	\$715,847.77	\$17,363.54	\$ 733,211.31
2011	37,513	8,392	12,874	4,460	63,239	206,855	6,450	213,305
2011	\$764,689.00	\$80,859.00	\$142,583.00	\$23,511.00	\$ 1,011,642.00	\$656,478.00	\$14,733.00	\$ 671,211.00

If we assumed that 100% of the annual vehicle permits purchased in 2011 were placed on vehicles registered in Kansas, only 2.73% of the potential registered light trucks and cars acquired the necessary permit.



Total visitation for 2011 was 6,208,064.

This was an overall decrease of 796,514 or 11.4% from 2010.

This was an overall decrease of 1,046,490 or 14.5% from 2009.

Our Goals:

- To strengthen the health and vitality of the citizens of Kansas and increase their use of the State Park system.

To have sustainable natural resource use and management [to] ensure benefits for today's citizens and for future generations.

To supply an adequate level of quality recreation services in a challenging financial period.

- To help Kansas State Parks continue to support the Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights

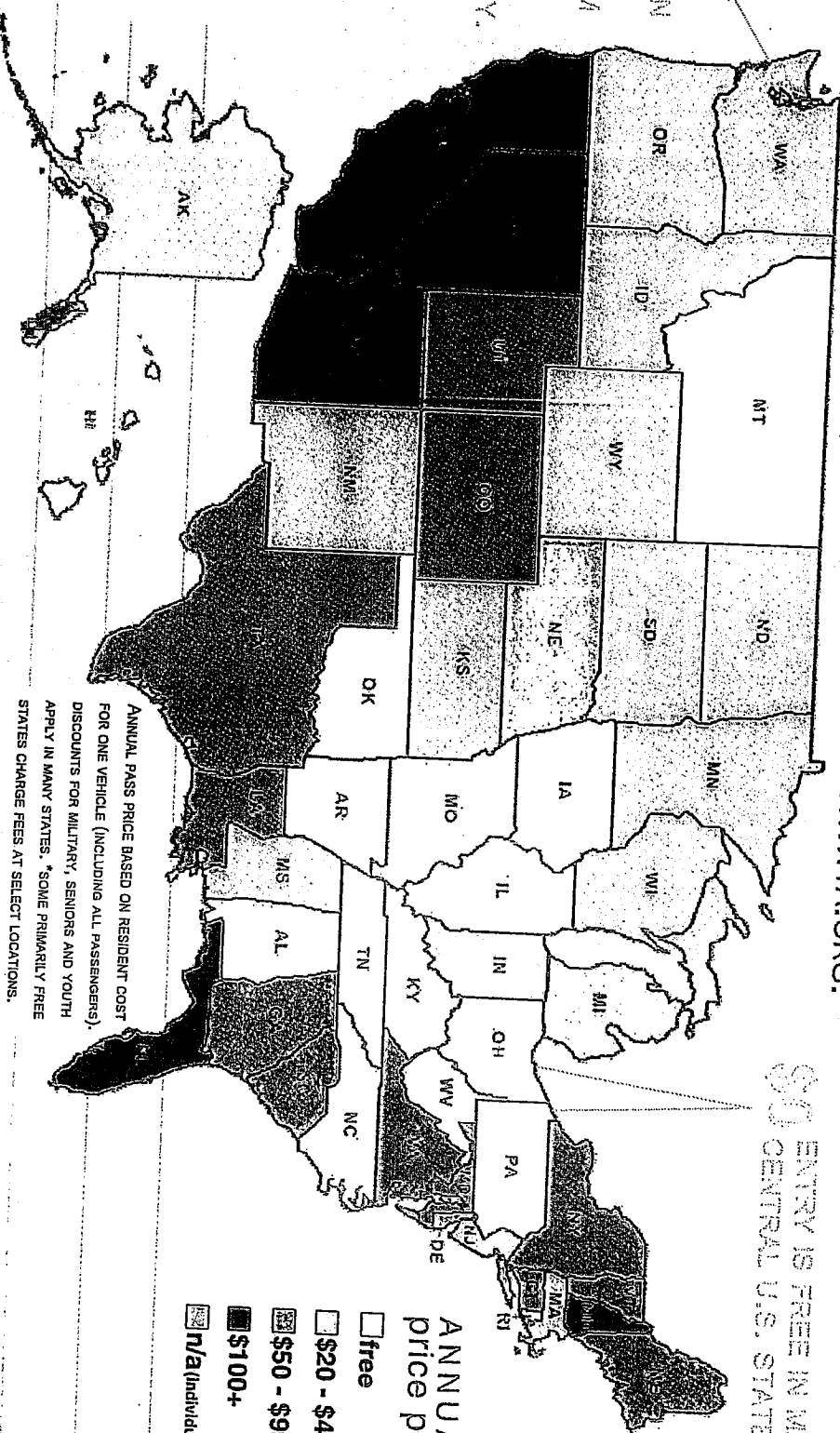


HOW MUCH FOR A STATE PARKS PASS?

WASHINGTON TRAILS ASSOCIATION LOOKS AT WHAT IT COSTS TO VISIT STATE LANDS ACROSS THE NATION. FIND MORE AT WWW.WTA.ORG.

\$30
 WASHINGTON ADOPTED A PASS SYSTEM FOR ACCESS TO STATE LANDS IN JULY.

\$205
 ARIZONA'S ANNUAL FEE IS THE NATION'S HIGHEST



\$0 ENTRY IS FREE IN MANY CENTRAL U.S. STATES

ANNUAL PASS PRICE BASED ON RESIDENT COST FOR ONE VEHICLE (INCLUDING ALL PASSENGERS) DISCOUNTS FOR MILITARY, SENIORS AND YOUTH APPLY IN MANY STATES. *SOME PRIMARILY FREE STATES CHARGE FEES AT SELECT LOCATIONS.

ANNUAL PASS price per vehicle

free	15+ STATES
\$20 - \$49	17 STATES
\$50 - \$99	12 STATES
\$100+	5 STATES
n/a (individual only)	1 STATE

- Alaska
- Hawaii
- Iowa
- Kentucky
- Missouri
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- Tennessee
- West Virginia
- Montana
- Illinois
- Alabama
- Michigan
- Kansas
- Minnesota
- North Dakota
- Wisconsin
- Delaware
- South Dakota
- Oregon
- Washington
- Alaska
- Idaho
- Wyoming
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- Massachusetts
- Indiana
- Mississippi
- Georgia
- Louisiana
- South Carolina
- Texas
- Virginia
- New York
- Connecticut
- Colorado
- Maine
- Utah
- Maryland
- Vermont
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- Florida
- California
- Arizona

15 States:	17 States	12 States	5 States
Free	\$20 -	\$50 -	\$100 +
AL	\$49	\$99	AZ
AR	AK	CO	CA
HI	DE	CT	FL
IA	ID	GA	NH
IL	IN	LA	NV
KY	KS	MD	
	MA	ME	
MO	MI	NY	1 NA
MT	MN	SC	State
NC	MS	TX	NE
OH	ND	UT	
OK	NJ	VA	
PA	NM	VT	
RI	OR		
TN	SD		
WV	WA		
	WI		
	WY		