

**Testimony on SB 331 on designating Flint Hills Nature Trail State Park
and Little Jerusalem Badlands State Park
To
The Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources**

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SB 331 seeks to amend K.S.A. 2017 Supp. 32-837.

I, Jake Huyett, strongly support SB 331, seeking to designate the Flint Hills Nature Trail and Little Jerusalem as Kansas state parks.

As an avid cyclist, I have already benefited from KDWPT's support of the FHNT. The trail is an amazing asset providing an opportunity to enjoy the Flint Hills whether by bike, foot or horseback. As a Kansas business professional engaged in tourism promotion, I know that state parks play a vital role in attracting tourists. State parks attract out-of-state visitors and encourage in-state travel by residents bringing tourist dollars into the state's economy. Investment in a state park not only produces important services to the community and visitors; it also has a multiplier effect that returns greater than the original amount to the state in real dollars.

Through Kansas' recent involvement with the Flint Hills Nature Trail, cyclist, walkers, runners and horseback riders have seen quick improvement in the trail system, with more improvements planned. Large events such as Rush the Rails, a ride/run race with music, food and family friendly events, and KDWPT's backing with additional marketing will highlight the benefits of the trail to the cycling community, bringing in both in-state visitors and out-of-state visitors. We believe strongly that as these assets are further developed and supported by the Kansas State Parks system, the communities in which the Flint Hills Nature Trail run through will also benefit through visitor spending.

**Example: Katy Trail Economic Impact for Missouri
In 2012, MGM2 performed an economic impact analysis on the Katy Trail State Park that summarized that the 400,000 annual visitors to the Katy Trail State Park have a total economic impact**

of \$18.4 million a year, which supports 367 jobs with a total payroll of \$5.1 million. The total value added to the local community from visitor spending is \$8.2 million. 33% of Katy Trail visitors surveyed were local, which means that 67% were nonlocal – meaning that over half of the trail visitors who spent money in market brought in outside cash flow for the Katy Trail communities.

Little Jerusalem is another excellent opportunity to benefit from the support system of KDWPT. Little Jerusalem's sandstone formations have taken thousands of years to form, and are both beautiful and vulnerable. KDWPT has the manpower and experience needed to put the infrastructure in place to both promote the land and to guide visitors once at the park. Through our marketing efforts for KDWPT and the use of trackable data, we believe that the target markets that utilize Kansas' state parks would benefit immensely from the addition of the Flint Hills Nature Trail and Little Jerusalem to the Kansas State Parks system. In 2017, our digital marketing efforts that targeted outdoor enthusiasts brought in an estimated visitor revenue of \$1.1 million for the state of Kansas, and cyclist marketing efforts brought in an estimated visitor revenue of \$1.3 million. As both niche target markets are potential state park visitors, we believe that adding these two assets under the umbrella of KDWPT will help gain visitor attention, increase revenue for the state of Kansas, and provide new opportunities for the local communities that both assets are located in.

Our Kansas State Parks provide immense value to citizens – both those who live nearby and tourists. Kansas' state parks draw visitors from near and far, bringing tourism revenue to local businesses – restaurants, hotels, grocery stores, retail stores, and more.

I, Jake Huyett, appreciate the opportunity to address the Committee and request favorable passage of the bill.