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Kobach Backing Bill To Exclude Lesser Prairie Chicken

Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach is backing a bill that would exclude the lesser prairie chicken from federal protection.

Kobach told the Senate Natural Resources Committee on Thursday that the bill would likely lead to a legal battle that pits state rights against federal law.

The bill would assert state sovereignty over non-migratory wildlife and declare null and void any federal law in Kansas on the lesser prairie chicken. Under the bill, state officials also would be allowed to charge federal officials with a felony for enforcing a federal law dealing with the lesser prairie chicken.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is deciding whether to list the lesser prairie chicken as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.

Associated Press