

Comment Report

HF 2104

A bill for an act relating to restrictions on the acquisition of real property by the department of natural resources.

Subcommittee Members: Mommsen-CH, Scholten, Sherman

Date: 02/01/2024

Time: 01:30 PM

Location: RM 102, Sup. Ct. Consult

Name: Richard Dietz

Comment: Members of the House Natural Resources Committee:Iowans are fortunate to have a good Interstate Highway System by which to leave the state in search of better places to live, work, and recreate.Please oppose HF 2104. It's nothing more than a purported answer to a problem that doesn't exist. When will we see bills that restrict the acquisition or taking of land for new development, for highways, or for private, forprofit pipelines? When will we see bills restricting the acquisition of land for the expansion of industrial agriculture? Isn't that the real problem?Do you happen to know the number of acres of land acquired by the DNR each year, and how that number compares to new development, for example? Is the land that the DNR acquires each year taken out of production or is it land that would better serve the public interest if protected and removed from production? Is it fair to legislate that a landowner cannot sell to whomever they wish?What does it say about a piece of legislation that must be fasttracked with little or no opportunity for input or comment? What sort of representation do we have in Iowa when bills are purposely announced and scheduled for debate without any real opportunity for public input? Thank you for your time and service.

Name: Thomas O'Donnell

Comment: Iowa has abundant natural beauty, but little of it is safeguarded against development or intensive agriculture. Marginal land should be preserved for the benefit of the environment and future generations of Iowans. Apparently, this law would do nothing to stop the sale of land for development or private hunting preserves, only that for the Department of Natural Resources' possession even if the department didn't bid on or directly buy the land. If lawmakers really are concerned about the loss of agricultural land and the lack of available land for new farmers, perhaps they should block the sale of the acres of good, tillable land around places like Waukee and Iowa City.

Name: Thomas Reardon

Comment: As an avid hiker, photographer, and angler, public lands are essential to the quality of life for myself and most Iowans, for all types of recreation from birdwatching to hunting. As a former biologist I know there is also a great need for wild places for the education of the next generation. Yet Iowa competes with Kansas in a race to the bottom of the barrel in the amount of public lands available to us.Here in Pottawattamie County, were pretty much at the bottom of the bottom in terms of available public land. Several years ago, INHF and The Nature Conservancy, in partnership with the DNR acquired over 500 acres of an old farm, with existing native prairie to be turned over to the DNR. Now, Green Hills WMA, close to an urban area, provides opportunities for untrammled hiking, hunting, and educational opportunities. This bill, as written, would have prevented that and the land would have most likely gone to developers for McMansions, instead of young farmers. Any

legislation to restrict the DNRs ability to acquire much needed land for public purposes is against the interests and health of Iowans (at 75 I need places to, as they say keep on moving to keep on moving). Please do not advance HF 2104