

February 18, 2023
Federal and State Affairs Committee
SB 3 - Proponent Testimony

Dr. David Burnham - preparator of the *Silvisaurus condrayi* exhibit - KU Natural History Museum in Lawrence

Chairman Thompson and Members of the Committee,

Dinosaurs have been popularized in the media leading to a perception they are common. In reality actual fossil specimens are quite rare. It is even more rare to find specimens as complete as the one being presented today. It would add immeasurably to our Kansas heritage to recognize *Silvisaurus condrayi* as proposed here today.

Silvisaurus represents the only known dinosaur from the Dakota Formation in KS. It is an armored dinosaur, with a body covering of spikes and plates. The skull and much of the skeleton were recovered making it one of the most unique and significant fossils of its kind. It was named in 1960 as a new species honoring Mr. Condray, and it has been studied by scientists from around the world ever since. This discovery has opened up a window into the past highlighting a previously unknown dinosaur.

The fossil was encased in very hard rock and it took years to clean it. The advent of modern tools allowed further preparation of the fossilized bones resulting in a wonderful exhibit at the KU Natural History Museum that includes a stunning portrait of the dinosaur recreated in its natural habitat. There is also a selfie-board of this painting near the exhibit for visitors to take their picture with a Kansas dinosaur.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Warren Condray for bringing his discovery to our attention and all Kansans can be proud that this rare find is unique to our state.