



HB2254
Support
Oral Testimony
Bryan Zesiger

Dear Members of the Kansas Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee,

My name is Bryan Zesiger. I am a Veteran, Kansas farmer, and owner of Z&M Twisted Vines. I extend my sincere appreciation to you for dedicating time to consider my message advocating for the passage of House Bill 2254. Regrettably, I find myself currently attending the American Farm Bureau national convention in Utah, making it impossible for me to address you personally as I did last year. Despite my absence, I am grateful that you are taking the time to listen not only to my voice but also to the numerous others supporting House Bill 2254.

I am writing to reiterate my strong support for this bill, which garnered overwhelming approval from both the House and Senate last year. Aligned with the guidelines established by the Department of Commerce and the Department of Agriculture in Kansas, House Bill 2254 recognizes agritourism as agriculture. It advocates for the taxation and evaluation of all associated activities, buildings, and land as agricultural. The 2019 Agritourism Handbook, funded by the USDA and released by the Department of Commerce, has been a valuable resource for agricultural entities across Kansas. We have used the Agritourism handbook as a guide to how we operate our Vineyard. Unfortunately, many, including ourselves, have encountered challenges convincing counties to recognize our farms as agriculture, resulting in ongoing disputes over property taxes for our Vineyard and Winemaking operations.

As a Farm Winery, agritourism is an integral part of our operation. People come to our vineyard not only to try our Kansas wines but to see our vineyard. They want to see where the grapes grow, participate in learning the process of how the wine is made and enjoy sipping on a glass while on our farm.

House Bill 2254 plays a crucial role in providing clarity and consistency by treating agritourism in Kansas as agriculture rather than a commercial entity. This legislation is vital for the prosperity of farms, ranches, and all facets of agriculture throughout the state. By formalizing this recognition, we can collectively celebrate our agricultural heritage, fostering a unified and thriving agricultural community in Kansas.

I urge you to support House Bill 2254, even in my absence, and contribute to the continued success and resilience of agriculture in our state.

Sincerely,

Bryan Zesiger

Bryan Zesiger
Owner, Z&M Twisted Vines
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