



February 8, 2023

Senate Committee on Financial Institutions and Insurance

Senator Jeff Longbine, Chair

Testimony in support of SB 34

From:

Allie Devine representing Kansas Farm Bureau, Kansas Corn Growers Association

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for holding this hearing on SB 34.

I am presenting comments on behalf of Kansas Farm Bureau, Kansas Corn Growers Association, Sunflower Electric Power Corporation (Sunflower Electric), and Northwest Kansas Economic Innovation Center (EICI). (Hereafter referred to as "Coalition")

Three years ago, the Coalition commissioned a study to identify barriers to agribusiness expansion in rural Kansas. We gathered substantial information from many sources including economic development professionals, national site selectors, builders, financial institutions, businesses, and Kansas community leaders. Our study identified a lack of housing as one of the main barriers to economic growth in rural areas. At about the same time the Kansas Housing Assessment made similar findings.

Last year our groups worked with approximately 12-15 other organizations to advocate for increased funding for housing. We are grateful for the Legislature's support for those requests and are anxious to see the outcomes and benefits to Kansas communities.

SB 34 is a continuation of expanding the tools available to Kansas communities in need of housing. While these are not traditionally considered "rural" areas, we support their ability to use RHID tool. We also support incentives to develop vacant lots in all communities.

For clarity, it is our understanding that this bill will assist the communities listed but will not change the eligibility requirements for the moderate-income housing (MIH) program or funding that is targeted specifically to cities and counties of 60,000 or less population.

Thank you for your consideration.

