

Testimony on HB 2177
to
The Senate Transportation Committee
By Chad Bontrager
Kansas Department of Agriculture
March 13, 2013

Good morning, Chairman Petersen and members of the committee. I am Chad Bontrager, agribusiness development coordinator and economist, with the Kansas Department of Agriculture, and I am here to express KDA's support of House Bill 2177.

On October 1, 2012, MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century) went into effect. MAP-21 provided for many things, including an exemption from some Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations for covered farm vehicles. The Kansas Corporation Commission is the expert agency in this arena but it is our understanding that most of the MAP-21 provisions can be implemented through KCC rules and regulations. The one MAP-21 exemption particularly addressed in the beginning of HB 2177 relates to amending the Uniform Commercial Driver's License Act.

Prior to the implementation of MAP-21, farm vehicles were exempt from the act within 150 air miles of any farm owned or leased by the registered owner of the farm vehicle. MAP-21 gives states the ability to change to an exemption for farm vehicles in intrastate commerce and within 150 air miles from any farm owned or leased in interstate commerce. In order to take advantage of the federal exemption, K.S.A. 2012 Supp. 8-2,127 needs to be amended as it is in HB 2177. This would allow farm vehicles to travel anywhere within Kansas boundaries and up to 150 air miles outside Kansas, depending on the location of the farm.

Agriculture is the largest industry in Kansas, accounting for approximately 25 percent of the state's economic activity. As we work to grow agriculture, we must also seek avenues to streamline requirements for doing agricultural business. Many farm families do their own trucking and HB 2177 makes it easier, more efficient and more economical for them.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. I will stand for questions at the appropriate time.