

The Honorable Les Mason, Chairperson
House Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Statehouse
Room 521-E Topeka, Kansas 66612

Dear Representative Mason:

I am native Kansan having grown up in the Flint hills, attended KSU and KU, and now living in the High Plains. I have come from a long line of farmers within the state of Kansas dating back to the homestead act. I am a 3rd generation Kansas Farm Bureau member, serve on the county farm bureau board, and serve on the executive director board for the Kansas Rural Center. I also coordinate the local farmers market. You could say my interest in agriculture in our state runs wide and deep, very similar to the root structure of hemp.

I am in favor of Mr. Dove's proposed bill HB 2182. Mr. Dove visited our rural community of Norton, Kansas in 2015 to share his idea of a legalization of industrial hemp bill. The room was filled with farmers both young and old, with political backgrounds ranging from moderate to conservative yet all were in favor of legalizing a crop that some attendees remember on their family farms during World War II. Hemp can easily be spotted in Norton County in ditches, alleys, and lawns, as it continues to reseed itself year after year from residual left during the times it was legal to grow. Hemp grows along public sidewalks just blocks from the Kansas Department of Transportation in our neighborhood.

Our state is a leader in agricultural production and time and time again our Kansas farmers have proven they are loyal to their businesses in providing the multitude of raw materials that feed, clothe, and supply energy for our nation and the world. Our current regulation on a state and federal level prohibit these land stewards from diversifying not only their crops but also their businesses. We have a duty as organizations that represent farmers and as a state government that relies on agriculture as a leading industry to advocate for the deregulation of a new and emerging ag market. We have the resources in research, land, and growers, to explore the potential opportunity that hemp cultivation and processing could offer as a viable new industry.

Farm Bureau has had a longer history of supporting industrial hemp dating back to policy passed in 1995 which read: "We recommend that <the> American Farm Bureau Federation encourage research into the viability and economic potential of industrial hemp production in the United States. We further recommend that such research includes planting test plots in the United States using modern agricultural techniques."

Policy advisor Kyle Cline with the Indiana Farm Bureau stated, "Industrial hemp is such opportunity that may work for some farmers in certain regions. Furthermore, industrial hemp will allow the US farmer to share in income that is currently going overseas. Right now, it is legal to import hemp but illegal to produce it. Therefore there is no opportunity currently to share in the profit."

The benefits of legalizing industrial hemp include diversifying crop options for farmers, new research opportunities in both the industrial and engineering fields, in addition to the biological benefits of fewer pesticides and herbicides, and the nitrogen fixing properties industrial hemp has that could enrich our soil biodiversity.

As a 6th generation Kansas native and agricultural advocate, please consider voting in favor of HB 2182 into law and invest in the agricultural and industrial future of Kansas.

*Afterall, If a Canadian or Chinese farmer can grow hemp and make money in the US, why are our laws preventing US farmers....**Kansas farmers**....from doing the same.*

Respectfully,

Caryl Hale
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