

February 15, 2019

To: Members of the Committee of Commerce, Labor and Economic Development

From: Wes and Mary Beth Traul, Cattle Producers in Anderson and Coffey County

Subject: **HB 2167**

Nearly \$110 billion of working capital has been eroded away in the last five years in American agriculture. That's \$75 million a day of cash disappearing from the ledger sheets of US agriculture\*. We are writing in support of HB 2167 since rural Kansas has shared in this extended period of economic decline and it is clear as you drive through our rural communities.

Rural tourism from visiting hunters can be a life line for rural communities. The money spent on food, beverages, fuel, lodging and supplies is a much-needed boost to small town main street merchants. HB 2167 insures those who choose Kansas as a hunting destination can spend their dollars in Kansas rural communities, thus providing substantial aid in our struggling rural economies.

HB 2167 will also allow Kansas landowners to have the final say who has access to their property, not a state agency, and thus become better managers of their farms and ranches for wildlife habitat. For many Kansas landowner's deer are a liability due to crop damage, broken fences, and equipment flat tires from antler sheds, causing additional labor and dollars to repair those damages without compensation.

HB 2167 will allow the landowner to see value in the habitat to encourage deer to reside on their property, thus avoiding the destruction of habitat (fence rows, water ways, wood lots, etc...). This provides an opportunity to drive an additional income source from hunters for Whitetail deer on their land to flow to their bottom line. As more landowners see Whitetail deer as a positive on their ledger sheet, management practices on individual farms and ranches will favor habitat improvements thus encouraging wildlife to flourish across the landscape of Kansas.

Overall, we see HB 2167 as a positive on our AG operation and a way to improve a struggling rural economy for the entire state of Kansas. For this reason, we urge your support in passing bill HB 2167.

\*Farm Talk Newspaper, February 13, 2019 issue, page 1