



Kansas Agricultural Alliance

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To: House Committee on Judiciary

From: Kansas Agricultural Alliance, Jesse McCurry, President

Date: Jan. 29, 2020

RE: Proponent, Joint Testimony on HB 2461, enacting the public litigation coordination act to restrict contracts by public entities for legal services on a contingent fee basis.

The Kansas Agricultural Alliance (KAA) is composed of statewide farm, livestock, commodity, cooperative, agri-business and agri-service organizations. KAA's mission is to promote the general welfare of agriculture and rural communities within Kansas and the U.S., with special emphasis upon legislative activities affecting agriculture, rural areas and cooperative services.

Chairman Patton and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 2461. This testimony is submitted on behalf of the Kansas Agricultural Alliance.

We understand the intent of House Bill 2461 is to allow the state to exercise greater control and management of large tort litigation actions where local units of government might become plaintiffs on a contingent fee basis. The bill would increase the state's ability to coordinate such litigation on a more comprehensive level, rather than the current practice of allowing each subordinate unit of government to enter into independent lawsuits. Such unorganized broad litigation schemes, at multiple levels of government, does not provide for efficient or cost-effective access to legal recovery by the citizens of the state as a whole.

This bill represents good public policy. The bill increases the state's ability to more quickly and efficiently reach a global settlement by consolidating and coordinating litigation at the state level. Such a coordinated effort stands to decrease overall legal costs to the state, and optimize citizens' shared recovery. For this reason, the associations jointly support this bill.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 2461. We respectfully request that the committee pass the bill out favorably.