

1515 E. 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Hutchinson, KS 67502  
www.kansasco-op.coop



Phone: 785-233-4085  
Toll Free: 888-603-2667

Date: January 29, 2020

To: Representative Fred Patton, Chairman, House Judiciary Committee

From: Shahira Stafford, Kansas Cooperative Council

**RE: House Bill 2461, restrict legal contracts by public entities on a contingent fee basis**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments in support of House Bill 2461. The Kansas Cooperative Council (KCC) represents all types of cooperatively-structured businesses including agriculture, utility, financial, and consumer cooperatives. Simply, cooperatives differ from other businesses because they are member-owned, member-controlled, democratically-governed, and profits are returned back to our patrons.

Our members share the Attorney General's concern on the growing trend of plaintiff attorneys offering class action lawsuits to local and municipal governments on a contingent fee basis. We support giving the Attorney General oversight before a public entity can enter into such a legal contract, and the power to reject an agreement that he believes is of statewide concern. Statewide coordination of litigation efforts should be pursued, rather than local jurisdictions engaging in a patch-work of lawsuits on their own.

The provisions of House Bill 2461 would only facilitate more transparency, consistency, and efficiency in awarding contingency fee agreements. We also believe that the bill would ultimately save taxpayer dollars in decreased legal costs to the state, as well as increase total legal recovery for all Kansans.

For these reasons, the Kansas Cooperative Council offers our support for House Bill 2461. Thank you for the opportunity provide testimony today.

Shahira Stafford  
Kansas Cooperative Council  
(785) 845-8535