

February 14, 2019

Rachel Henderson

General Manager, The Marmaton Market

House Bill 2261

Chairman Johnson and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 2261. The Marmaton Market is a local grocery store created by the town of Moran and surrounding communities. The area was losing its sole-proprietor grocer, Stub's, as the owners were looking to downsize. Without a grocery store in Moran, there would be a food desert, necessitating a drive of at least 26 miles round trip for those living in Moran.

The area is not a wealthy one, with many living on a fixed income. Many do not have the ability to own or drive a car. Those that do, make regular trips to "the city" to shop and get goods that are either not available to the area or less expensive due to taxes.

When we became The Marmaton Market last June, I was able to implement a staff discount of 10%. This just barely covers our sales tax of 8.25%. A reduction on the state grocery tax would lift a burden off of rural residents and allow them to have a bigger food budget.

Assuming a \$400 per month household grocery budget, this decreased tax burden would allow for about 500,000 extra servings of vegetables a year for households in Allen County.

The Marmaton Market exists to provide affordable, healthy goods to parts of Southeast Kansas that would otherwise go without. The reduction in Grocery Sales Tax would allow Southeast Kansans to make eating healthy food a more affordable option. For this reason, I ask the committee to support House Bill 2261.