



Kansas Grain and Feed Association
Renew Kansas Biofuels Association
Kansas Agribusiness Retailers Association

March 18, 2021

To: House Judiciary Committee
From: Randy Stookey, SVP of Government Affairs, KGFA, KARA, and RKBA
Re: Joint, Written Proponent Testimony on SB 283, changing the business liability provision in the COVID-19 response and reopening for business liability protection act to apply to actions prior to termination of the state of disaster emergency related to COVID-19 public health emergency.

Chairman Patton and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 283. This testimony is submitted jointly on behalf of Kansas Grain and Feed Association (KGFA), Kansas Agribusiness Retailers Association (KARA), and Renew Kansas Biofuels Association.

KGFA is the state association of the grain receiving, storage, processing and shipping industry in Kansas whose membership includes over 950 Kansas business locations and represents 99% of the commercially licensed grain storage in the state. KARA is an agribusiness industry trade association with membership of over 700 companies across Kansas. Renew Kansas Biofuels Association is the trade association of the Kansas biofuels industry whose mission is to protect and promote the biofuels industry, and demonstrate the positive impacts of biofuels on the Kansas economy.

Across Kansas, our member grain elevators, biofuel processing plants, and agribusiness facilities employ hundreds of Kansans, contribute greatly to the local and state economies, and pay millions of dollars in taxes that help support schools, and local and state government.

This testimony is submitted on behalf of the above-named industries in support of the proposal to amend the COVID-19 Response and Reopening for Business Liability Protection Act to extend, until March 31, 2022, the expiration date of the statute governing COVID-19 claim immunity for persons or agents of persons conducting business in the state by one year,. The act provides certain relief during this public health emergency, including reasonable business liability provisions.

The business liability section provides businesses with limited immunity in a civil action for a COVID-19 claim if acting pursuant to, and in substantial compliance with, public health directives applicable to the activity giving rise to the cause of action when the cause of action occurred.

As we fight to slow the spread of the virus during this pandemic, this business liability provision works to encourage business and industry to continue employing Kansas workers and conducting business. For that reason, we stand in support of SB 283 and ask this committee to pass the bill out favorably. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to testify in support of the proposed legislation.