



March 2nd, 2022

Testimony in Support of HB 2711 & HB 2720 House Taxation

Chairman Smith and Members of the House Taxation Committee:

The Kansas Food and Farm Coalition (FFC) supports HB 2711 and HB 2720. Kansas FFC is a group of long-standing nonprofit organizations concerned about our food system—from farm to fork. Coalition members include KC Healthy Kids, the Kansas Food Action Network, the Kansas Rural Center, and Harvesters. Our coalition works to support policies that assist small and mid-sized farms, increase production and sales of locally grown foods, increase access to healthy food for all, and reduce food insecurity in our communities. Both HB 2711 and HB 2720 are helpful in working toward those goals. While there are merits to both bills, we appreciate the more immediate implementation date in HB 2720 of August 1st, 2022. On the other hand, we support the continuation of the refundability of the food sales tax credit in HB 2711 until the state rate is reduced to 0%. The refundability of the sales tax credit is especially crucial for lower income families who spend a higher percentage of their income on food. Further, in the absence of any immediate reform on eliminating the state sales tax on food, we would support the three-year gradual reduction.

As a regressive tax, the state sales tax on food impacts our most vulnerable Kansas families who are trying to make ends meet. Passage of either of these bills would help increase food access and security while providing a modest level of relief to Kansas children and families. An element not included in either of these bills, but that we believe is of great importance for small farmers, producers, and grocers, is language eliminating the sales tax at farmers markets. This is a small measure benefiting not only consumers, but also relieves some burden and barriers for small-scale producers as they seek to sell their products.

Both of these proposals are a great step toward prosperity for Kansas families, farmers, and grocers. For these reasons we ask you to support the policies outlined in these bills. Thank you for your consideration and I welcome any questions at the appropriate time.

Stuart J. Little, Ph.D.
Little Government Relations
stuartjlittle@mac.com

The Kansas Food and Farm Coalition

The Kansas Food and Farm Coalition(FFC) is a group of long-standing Kansas nonprofit organizations concerned about our food system - from farm to fork. In recognition of how interwoven food system issues are, these organizations have come together to support policies that grow Kansas communities' local food systems. This includes policies that support small and mid-sized farms, increase production and sales of locally grown foods, increase access to healthy food for all, and improve food security in our communities.

Kansas Food and Farm Council 2022 Policy Agenda

- Eliminate the state sales tax on food.
- Increase SNAP enrollment among eligible individuals and families:
 - Remove the child support enforcement requirement for SNAP.
 - Remove the restriction on the SNAP time limit waiver for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD waiver).
 - Remove the ban on SNAP for drug felons.
- Support local food procurement and promotion. In particular:
 - Increase funding for and participation in the Kansas Department of Education Farm to School Program.
 - Identify opportunities to build upon the USDA Farm to Food Bank program with state support.

Food and Farm Coalition Partner Organizations and Contact Information:

 <p>KC Healthy Kids: KC Healthy Kids was established in 2005 to advance the health and well-being of children and families through community-driven initiatives and advocacy where they live, learn, work and play. Contact: Beth Low-Smith blsmith@kchealthykids.org</p>	<p>Kansas Food Action Network <u>Kansas Food Action Network:</u> Composed of over 30 local food, farm and policy councils, the Kansas Food Action Network is a statewide advocacy network focused on building resilient local and state food systems in Kansas. Contact: Miranda Miller-Klugesherz- mklugesherz@kchealthykids.org</p>
 <p><u>Kansas Rural Center:</u> KRC is led by Kansans who strive to help each other and their rural or urban communities grow a healthy food and farming system. We envision a future of</p>	 <p><u>Harvesters-The Community Food Network:</u> Harvesters is the regional food</p>

thriving family farms, revitalized communities, a clean environment, a healthy local and regional food system, and viable livelihoods for farmers, including opportunities for the next generation growing our food. Contact: Tom Buller - tom@kansasruralcenter.org

bank serving a 26-county area in northwest MO and northeast KS. In FY21, Harvesters provided more than 77 million pounds of food to more than 760 nonprofit agencies serving the hungry and food insecure. Contact: Karen Siebert- ksiebert@harvesters.org

** Lobbyist Representation: Little Government Relations. Contact: Stuart Little or Mallory Lutz: stuartjlittle@mac.com, lutzmallory@gmail.com **