

To: Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare, Senator Richard Hilderbrand, Chairperson

From: John Donley, Kansas Farm Bureau

Date: February 16, 2021

Re: SB 175 - Enacting the rural emergency hospital act

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. We appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of SB 175.

Kansas Farm Bureau was founded over 100 years ago with a mission to advocate, educate and serve agriculture and rural Kansas. We write today on behalf of more than 104,000 members who live and work in each of the state's 105 counties to urge your support to SB 175 to help keep rural hospitals in our state operating and vibrant.

Access to high quality health care within a reasonable driving distance is important to ensure those producing the world's food, fiber and biofuel supplies can receive necessary care in a timely manner. Hospitals in rural areas must have access to funding models that reflect their unique individual financial and demographic profiles.

We must ensure that our state's hospitals can alter their size and model if their financial needs call for it; therefore, we support the Rural Emergency Medical Center model as an option. Communities shouldn't be forced to decide between a legacy hospital model and no hospital at all. A third option that maintains access to emergency services, primary care physicians, and outpatient services is vital.

We strongly support the REMC model and urge your favorable action on SB 175.

Access to high quality health care is a critical component of a strong agriculture and rural economy. We continue to advocate on behalf of our state's farmers, ranchers, and rural areas and appreciate your timely consideration of SB 175. We stand ready assist as you move forward with these important discussions.