

Legislative Testimony: **Neutral** SB 263 Industrial Hemp

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Thank you for the opportunity to express my support of neutral of SB 263 Ag Hemp. Working in economic development in rural Kansas the past 9 years has shown the need for agribusinesses to have the opportunity for value added ag products to be researched within the Kansas ag industry. Value added ag allows the ag industry room to expand their ag operations while also creating new jobs in rural areas within the sectors of processing, distribution, and manufacturing. In this specific case, manufacturing could also be an option as hemp is utilized in many everyday products. New job creation and new business development is needed in rural Kansas in order to maintain and grow the rural population and business environment. The value added ag sector provides new opportunities for young farmers to be able to have jobs and stay in a rural area until they are able to fully take over the family farm. With the changes in farming over the years, it has become difficult to succession plan the family farm due to the cost of doing business within the agribusiness industry. Young farmers find it difficult to have the credit needed to be able to receive loans to purchase the farm, those that can, find themselves maxed out early on and are unable to survive commodity downturns like farmers that are well-seasoned and have had many years in working the family farm. Value added ag provides another opportunity and potential leg of funding to funnel into the family farm. Young farmers will have the opportunity to stay on the farm by producing value added ag style crops while also farming traditional crops. Industrial Hemp is value added ag, something that should be a priority in Kansas as an ag state. Research is vital to progress in this area and impeding this process does not serve well to the potential economic growth this initiative could provide.

Respectfully Submitted,

Janae Talbott