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Date: February 16, 2021
To: Senator Carolyn McGinn, Chairwoman, Senate Local Government Committee
From: Shahira Stafford, Kansas Cooperative Council
RE: Opponent Testimony on Senate Concurrent Resolution 1606

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Kansas Cooperative Council (KCC), thank you for the opportunity to communicate our opposition to Senate Concurrent Resolution 1606. The KCC is a statewide association that works on behalf of all types of cooperatively structured businesses in Kansas. The industries organized as cooperatives are vast, including agriculture, utility, financial and insurance.

Cooperatives must adhere to rigorous state and federal guidelines. Our agricultural co-ops in particular, operate in a highly regulated industry, and for good reason. Grain elevators and ag retail co-ops are integral in the Kansas production agriculture chain, which we recognize directly impacts the safety and health of the communities that we serve. Our members take that responsibility seriously every single day.

The KCC supports the current statutory home rule authority for counties, including the existence of numerous limitations and exemptions in statute to their home rule grant of power. We oppose any legislative effort to grant counties the same constitutional home rule authority that cities possess.

The uniform application of environmental and agricultural regulation in Kansas is essential for our members to be able to do business safely and efficiently. Patch-work regulation that varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction is confusing for the regulated community and often leads to inefficiency in production, increasing costs for the industry.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to comment on SCR 1606, and we respectfully ask that you not move this legislation forward.