



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

816 SW Tyler, Topeka, Kansas 66612 | 785.220.5211

Date: February 20, 2019
To: House Committee on Commerce, Labor, and Economic Development
From: Randy E. Stookey, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs
RE: **Proponent Joint Testimony on HB 2354, resolving liability concerns regarding high school apprenticeships and on-the-job training programs**

Chairman Tarwater and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 2354. This testimony is submitted jointly on behalf of Kansas Grain and Feed Association (KGFA), Kansas Agribusiness Retailers Association (KARA), and Renew Kansas Association.

KGFA is the state association of the grain receiving, storage, processing and shipping industry in Kansas. KGFA's 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 Association is the trade association of the 10 ethanol processing plants in Kansas.

We understand the intent of House Bill 2354 to resolve liability concerns regarding high school apprenticeships and training programs by making these students employees of the school district. Specifically, the bill allows high school students engaged in a school-sponsored apprenticeship, work-study program, or similar program to be covered by the school district for purposes of the state workers' compensation program.

It is the policy of our associations to support efforts to provide adequate protections to employees through the state Workers' Compensation program, while at the same time ensuring fair and reasonable costs to business. Our associations also support policies to promote a ready, trained workforce for Kansas agribusiness, including the promotion of vocational and technical training.

There is an on-going demand in the agribusiness industry for trained, skilled labor. As this bill encourages student participation in vocational and technical training programs, while also creating awareness of career opportunities for these young workers, we would stand in support on the bill.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 2354. We respectfully request that the committee pass the bill out favorably, and we will stand for questions at the appropriate time.