

March 15th, 2022
SB560 MEDICAL MARIJUANA REGULATION ACT



PROPONENT
WRITTEN TESTIMONY
Sarah Stephens
CEO, Tallgrass Hemp & Cannabis
President, KS Hemp Consortium
Sarahstephensselmon@gmail.com 316-619-7612

Federal & State Affairs Committee Chair and Members,

Thank you for taking time to hear SB560 and working to advance a safe, equitable medical cannabis program in Kansas. As an industrial hemp producer licensed by the Kansas Department of Agriculture since 2019, and on behalf of the members of the Kansas Hemp Consortium, I urge you to support SB560 with minor adjustments.

SB560 goes a long way toward establishing a safe medical cannabis program with reasonable regulations. The highest priority edits are as follows; less expensive licensing fees for all license levels, most dramatically for cultivators, and building security requirements determined by the Medical Marijuana Advisory Committee instead of detailed in this legislation.

The high licensing fees currently listed in SB560 will price out many small Kansas businesses and family farms, including mine. At those rates, only large, multi-state operators will be able to afford to participate. Cultivators are the starting point for the industry and in order for every other level to succeed, we need high quality, medical grade cannabis to be well supplied. Licensing fees for cultivators closer to \$5 per square foot, instead of the currently proposed \$40 per square foot, would encourage the legal market to develop in a way that allows small businesses and family farms to thrive.

Consider replacing the extremely detailed security requirements in Sec. 42 with language that authorizes the Medical Marijuana Advisory Board to mandate minimum security requirements as part of their work. This gives the time and expertise needed to make minimum requirements that address situational needs without overburdening business owners with security mandates that are unnecessary in their operation.

Thank you for considering the positive impacts for Kansas medical cannabis patients, small business owners and the agricultural sector that will develop with lower licensing fees. A robust, legal cannabis program is the only effective antidote to black market production and sales.

Thank you for working to advance a safe, equitable medical cannabis program in Kansas this year!

Kind regards,

Sarah Stephens