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Date: February 5, 2020

To: Senator Dan Kerschen, Chairman, Senate Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee

From: Shahira Stafford, Kansas Cooperative Council

RE: Senate Bill 286, extends the sunset of the Kansas aboveground and underground program and increases the fund liability maximum

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing us to provide our support of Senate Bill 286. My name is Shahira Stafford, and I represent the Kansas Cooperative Council (KCC). The KCC represents all types of cooperatively-structured businesses including agriculture, utility, financial, and consumer coops. Simply, cooperatives differ from other businesses because they are member-owned, member-controlled, democratically-governed, and profits are returned to our patrons.

Agricultural cooperatives often have grain, agronomy, precision ag, seed, feed, and fuel operations. Some of our members have both aboveground and underground storage tanks at their facilities (ASTs/USTs), and we support extending the state's regulatory oversight program through 2034, as directed in SB 286.

SB 286 also increases the maximum cap for reimbursement of clean-up costs from \$1 million to \$2 million in the event of a release from a petroleum storage tank. Soil and groundwater contamination remedial systems are complex, and site-clean-up costs have increased significantly in the past 20 years.

Although most sites have been remediated, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment estimates less than ten remaining sites will take corrective action; and they expect another ten in the next five years.

It is our understanding that Kansas has one of the best-run AST/UST programs in the country, and the KCC supports its continuation and improvement through the provisions set forth in SB 286. Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and we respectfully request that the committee pass this bill favorably.

Shahira Stafford
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