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TORY MARIE BLEW
112TH DISTRICT

April 14th, 2024

Chairman Peck and members of the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee,

In 2021 I hosted a hemp tour in Barton County for all State elected officials, and the turnout was outstanding with over 60 attendees. With hemp being fairly new to the state at the time, many folks had no idea what the crop looked like, and what resources we could produce from it. It was extremely educational, and it is still talked about to this day.

Throughout the tour, legislators asked the owners of South Bend Hemp what are some challenges that they are experiencing, and as you can imagine, that is what has led us to HB 2168. During the 2023 session, Chairman Rahjes held a hearing on HB 2168, and of course many questions arose over some of the sections within the bill. Over the off session, Chairman Rahjes worked with the stakeholders to find a compromise, and the end result is House Substitute for HB 2168, the product you have before you today.

The current bill is simply lowering the fee from \$1,200 to \$500 for hemp producers. This will allow more farmers to explore with this crop and learn what it takes to hopefully be in their rotation. With drought being an issue many Kansas farmers experience, this is a great opportunity for farmers to test on a smaller plot to see if this crop is sustainable for their business and/or ground.

While I would love to see more work be done to decriminalize this crop from being associated with marijuana, I believe this is a great start with the hopes we can continue to support hemp farmers. Thank you for your time today regarding HB 2168, and I ask for your support when the time arises. I will stand for questions at the appropriate time.

Kansas Proud,

Tory Marie