

**To: House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources, Rep. Ken Rahjes, Chairman**

**From: John Donley, Kansas Farm Bureau**

**Date: February 14, 2023**

**Re: HB 2160-concerning cotton bales**

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Chairman Rahjes and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2160 on behalf of Kansas Farm Bureau (KFB.) KFB is the state's largest general farm organization representing more than 30,000 farm and ranch families through our 105 county Farm Bureau associations.

Over the past year or more, Kansas Farm Bureau has worked with the Kansas Highway Patrol and the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC) regarding the proper enforcement of the secured load statute as it relates to the hauling of large cotton bales. Those conversations led to the Kansas Highway Patrol issuing a letter to all troopers regarding the proper enforcement procedure for farmers transporting large cotton bales. Essentially, the letter was similar to the language in this proposed bill. However, the letter only applied to farmers and not to commercial haulers.

It is my understanding that the intent of HB 2160 is to put the policy directed in the Kansas Highway Patrol letter into statute. It is my understanding that the bill may need to be amended to ensure that the law does not apply to commercial carriers to avoid losing federal highway funding. It is my understanding that there will likely be an amendment to ensure that the federal highway funding is protected but ensuring that Kansas farmers are not overburdened with excessive regulations.

I want to thank the Kansas Highway Patrol and KCC for working with the industry to find an adequate solution to this issue, and we look forward to working with them to ensure that the language in HB 2160 does not harm federal transportation funding.

Thank you again for allowing me to provide testimony in support of HB 2160. I will stand for questions at the appropriate time.