



## KANSAS DAIRY

TO: House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources  
FROM: Janet Bailey, CEO, Kansas Dairy  
DATE: March 6, 2024  
RE: HB 2816

Chairman Rahjes and member of the House Agriculture Committee, on behalf of the dairy farmers of the Kansas Dairy Association I offer support for HB 2816. The Kansas Dairy Association has represented dairy farms border-to-border across the state for three decades. We also support relevant research for our dairy industry, the fastest growing segment of Kansas agriculture.

HB 2816 seeks to address a gap in current law due to a 10<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court ruling. As such, state law needs to be updated to ensure protections are in place for those farms and animal facilities that would have employees seek a relationship with the entity under false pretense. Further, HB 2816 puts into statute the penalty on crimes committed against animal facilities.

Labor is a top concern among those in the dairy industry. As such, it can make our industry even more vulnerable to those who might seek employment with motives other than working in the care of our animals and production of milk. I would share with the committee that among the job descriptions on our farms, the most common and prevalent would be “animal caretaker”. Whether caring for newborn and bottle calves in individual pens, small groups of weaned young stock, tending to heifers as they grow, caring for springing heifers and dry cows, or feeding and milking lactating cows, the care of those animals drives every expectation from those in the milk barn to those repairing watering systems and cleaning pens. Employees on dairy farms have a lot of contact with animals, other employees, and the day-to-day realities of working with living stock. Those who seek employment with false motives can put our dairy families, employees and the very stock they claim to wish to defend in harm's way. Further, their motives are clear in their desire to damage our industry and the livelihoods of the industry.

Having spent two days very recently with veterinarians, dairy scientists and dairy students, I appreciate that they have the interest of dairy farmers and livestock at their core. In fact, some grew up on dairy farms and continue to serve our industry. That said, their efforts and stock in research facilities are also worthy of protection.

We encourage your affirmative support of HB 2816 to protect the food supply and those working to produce it.

Respectfully,

Janet Bailey  
CEO  
Kansas Dairy Association