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Kansas Grain & Feed Association

Kansas Agribusiness Retailers Association

House Federal and State Affairs Committee Written Testimony in Support of HB 2712 Kansas Business Workforce Communities Partnership Act Submitted by Ron Seeber on behalf of the Kansas Agribusiness Retailers Association, and Kansas Grain and Feed Association

Thank you Chairman Brunk and members of the House Federal and State Affairs Committee, I am Ron Seeber, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs of the Kansas Grain and Feed Association (KGFA) and the Kansas Agri-business Retailers Association (KARA). The KGFA is a voluntary state association with a membership encompassing the entire spectrum of the grain receiving, storage, processing and shipping industry in the state of Kansas. KGFA's membership includes over 950 Kansas business locations and represents 99% of the commercially licensed grain storage in the state. KARA's membership includes over 700 agribusiness firms that are primarily retail facilities which supply fertilizers, crop protection chemicals, seed, petroleum products and agronomic expertise to Kansas farmers. KARA's membership base also includes ag-chemical and equipment manufacturing firms, distribution firms and various other businesses associated with the retail crop production industry.

KGFA and KARA firmly believe immigration is a federal policy and that it is best that our United States Congress address this issue. However, should it be the will of the Kansas Legislature to move forward with state specific immigration reform, KARA and KGFA hopes the committee will support HB 2712, the Kansas Business Workforce Communities Partnership Act. Agribusiness is the backbone of rural Kansas and alternative proposals will have the affect of a massive loss of workforce and hit our economy with devastating blow. The Kansas Business Workforce Communities Partnership Act is a pro-business, pro-economic growth way to handle the issue of undocumented workers. This bill allows a partnership with the Department of Homeland Security to manage undocumented works. This will allow accountability in hiring practices and not hurt the Kansas economy.

It is a self-funded program which does not impose expensive, job-killing regulations on business nor cost-prohibitive unfunded mandates on State and Local Governments. It is not amnesty for undocumented workers; it is simply a work authorization program for undocumented persons who pose no threat to national security or public safety.

Again, KGFA and KARA urge your support of HB 2712. It will allow workforce stability in the Kansas workforce and would avoid mistakes made in other states that resulted in the decimation of their agribusiness economies.

House Fed & State Affairs

Date: 2-14-12

Attachment 15