



901 W First St, Box 1064, McPherson, Ks. 67460 620-241-6630 kfum@nfuic.kscoxmail.com kansasfarmersunion.org

SB 113

Proponent Testimony
Kansas Farmers Union
Donn Teske, President KFU

Kansas Farmers Union stands in support of SB113.

On behalf of the family farmers, ranchers, and rural members of the Kansas Farmers Union, thank you for the opportunity to explain why we support this bill. Our members support this bill for a variety of reasons; all of those reasons improve the life and health of farmers and rural people across Kansas.

First and foremost opening up patient treatment options for people suffering chronic illness is a moral issue that has to be placed first on our priority list. We frequently support expanding professional licenses to increase care in rural communities, this is a bill to add yet another tool to the toolbox for addressing patient care. This will not help every patient in Kansas but for those that suffer chronic pain or are undergoing cancer treatment and many other long term illnesses this could be helpful and potentially less harmful than other treatments.

This bill also presents a new opportunity to Kansas farmers and an opportunity to revitalize rural communities. It is no secret that farm income is down as commodity prices are very low. Farmers are looking for new opportunities to boost farm income and growing medical cannabis would be an entirely new industry that we know there is strong demand for in Kansas. This bill would bring new opportunities with increased economic activity in rural Kansas. All of the medical cannabis that would be prescribed and consumed in this bill would have to be grown in Kansas by Kansas farmers.

Last year the State of Kansas passed a bill to allow farmers to grow industrial hemp, they were quickly followed by the Federal government. Kansas farmers are gearing up to grow hemp but there will be regulatory challenges as well as challenges with economies of scale. Passing medical cannabis would help to generate a larger market for growing similar crops that will assist with processing and other aspects of growing the different variations of the cannabis plant. In short it would help to scale up operations and markets to a profitable level.

Kansas is in an ever-shrinking extreme minority of states that do not allow marijuana in any form. This denies Kansas the opportunity to participate in a growing industry. Right now across North America businesses are being built to supply a product that is in demand and Kansas farmers and Kansas industry are forced to sit it out. The horse is already out of the barn, medical marijuana laws are already in effect to some level or another in all but 5 states, why would we sit this out? We can find no benefit to economically handcuffing producers and being the last state to join.

Donn Teske
Kansas Farmers Union

Founded in 1907, Kansas Farmers Union is one of the state's oldest active agricultural organizations. Our primary goal is to sustain, strengthen, protect, and enhance the economic interests and quality of life for family farmers and ranchers and their local communities.