



March 13, 2018

House Agriculture Committee
300 SW 10th Street, 582-N
Topeka, KS 66612

Chairman Hoffman and House Agriculture Committee Members,

Please accept this as a letter in strong support of Senate Bill 263, a bill that would allow research and development of industrial hemp in the State of Kansas. As the former Executive Director of the Smoky Hill Development Corporation, the economic development arm of Ellsworth County, I have been working on this issue with my colleagues for three years.

Kansas cannot afford to pass up this revenue generating opportunity. As with any business, as you know, our farmers and ranchers deserve the ability to diversify their operations. Industrial hemp has the potential to be the catalyst for current and future farmers to sustain their livelihood and in turn grow their business, but also the ancillary businesses that will benefit throughout the state.

We all are aware of the research done by other states across our country who have decided to explore the options of industrial hemp. The potential to grow our farming operations is critical, but the manufacturing, development, and exportation opportunities of the product are endless, bringing needed growth and a new revenue stream to our state.

The use of industrial hemp is recognized throughout the world, why would the State of Kansas pass on this opportunity considering the farming and manufacturing landscape we offer? Mrs. Talbott, Russell County, has laid out all the critical elements for this to be productive not only for Russell County, but the state. Having former law-enforcement officials, farmers, manufactures, and business leaders in support of this venture speaks volumes of what cooperation can bring to our state's economy if we don't face impediments.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I would be happy to answer further questions during the committee hearing. If you have further questions I can be contacted at (785) 531-2479 or robjfillion@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. Fillion", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Rob Fillion