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**Testimony in Support of SB 263 to  
The Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee  
By Susan Metzger  
Kansas Department of Agriculture  
January 16, 2018**

Good morning Chairman Kerschen and members of the committee, my name is Susan Metzger and I am a deputy secretary at the Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA). I am here to testify in support of SB 263. KDA stands at the ready to develop a licensing and testing program to comply with all federal laws if a Regents institution desires to cultivate industrial hemp for research purposes. Our existing laboratory equipment can test for tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) levels; the only required purchases are the testing materials.

Because hemp was outlawed in the 1940s, little to no applicable research on how it would perform in Kansas is available.

Here is an overview of university research results concerning hemp:

- The most current production budgets available are from 2015 from the University of Kentucky and Colorado State University. Those studies concluded that high yielding hemp grown for oil had a higher productivity than corn and soybeans, but lower yielding varieties produced returns lower than traditional crops.
- Water and nutrient requirements are comparable to wheat (CSU, 2015).
- The current production information also details that the crop does best under intensive tillage systems, which would be contrary to the no-till and reduced-tillage systems that nearly all Kansas farmers now employ.
- Due to the length of the growing season and planting and harvest dates, this would not be a crop that could be used in a double-crop system.
- Crop insurance products are not available for hemp, so producers must keep that in mind before switching from traditional crops.
- When heat- or drought-stressed, the seeds can express elevated levels of THC, creating legal issues, as seeds testing above 0.3% THC are considered illicit.

However, educational institutions in Kansas, if given the opportunity to conduct research, may be able to overcome the challenges of commercially producing hemp to make it a profitable endeavor in the state.

Select publications on hemp production and profitability:

*Economic Considerations for Growing Industrial Hemp*, University of Kentucky (retrieved 12/26/17)

<https://www.uky.edu/Ag/AgEcon/pubs/reshempimpfarmer28.pdf>

*Hemp as an Agricultural Commodity*, Congressional Research Service (retrieved 12/26/17)

<https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL32725.pdf>

*Industrial Hemp*, Colorado State University (retrieved 12/26/17)

[http://www.wr.colostate.edu/ABM/Industrial%20Hemp%20ABM\\_NOTE\\_Oct2015.pdf](http://www.wr.colostate.edu/ABM/Industrial%20Hemp%20ABM_NOTE_Oct2015.pdf)