

Kansas Agricultural Aviation Association – Steve Hitchcock, Government Affairs
House Agriculture Committee – February 10, 2020

Neutral Testimony – HB2463

Chairman Highland and Committee:

The Kansas Agricultural Aviation Association recognizes the KDA's need to update the Kansas Pesticide Law by streamlining the financial responsibility requirement. Having alternate methods to meet this requirement has been a positive thing in providing some of our members with beneficial flexibility and has kept Kansas from being labeled an "insurance only" state in the realm of litigation. However, we understand the need to update requirements to more closely align with current practices, ease KDA record-keeping, and establish an effective minimum standard for entry into some licensee categories under the KPL.

Our past opposition to these changes was due to the fact that what was seen as necessary to address issues with licensees in other areas under the pesticide law was unnecessary and counterproductive for our members. This is a side effect of the broad range of industries covered by the KPL. We are here today to express our cooperation with the KDA on these changes and to ask for your support in the future for broader changes that address the needs of aerial applicators.

Our members are following closely the EPA-mandated plan being submitted next month by the KDA related to recertification and other issues. We are very encouraged by the direction of the plan related to an aerial category. A separate category for aerial applicators has been implemented in many other states and is now even more needed in Kansas. Operating under the Kansas Pesticide Law, our pilots and operators need a category that addresses their unique continuing education needs. Tailoring required content to those needs and allowing existing industry and various states' curricula to meet these requirements is important to our members. Increasing reciprocity with other states is also critical to the progress of our industry in meeting the needs of agricultural producers.

For these reasons, the KAAA is here today as a neutral conferee and will not oppose HB2463 as we did several years ago.

