

To: House Agriculture Committee, Representative Ken Rahjes, Chair

From: John Donley, Kansas Farm Bureau

Date: March 7, 2022

Re: SB 346 - Relating to milk and dairy products

Chairman Rahjes and members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the extension of the fee sunset in SB 346. My name is John Donley, and I am speaking today on behalf of Kansas Farm Bureau (KFB). KFB is the state's largest general farm organization representing more than 30,000 farm and ranch families through our 105 county Farm Bureau Associations.

The dairy industry is an important and growing industry in Kansas. There are over 200 dairy herds in the state of Kansas. A strong and effective dairy program within the Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA) is necessary to ensure that Kansas dairies continue to produce a safe and wholesome product for Kansas consumers as well as consumers across the nation and world. KFB believes that the provisions in this bill, including an extension of current fees, will help the Department to continue to fill that necessary role.

First, KFB applauds the department for finding ways to continue to run this important program without raising fees. In previous years, these fee extension requests often included fee increases. Kansas Farm Bureau feels that while fees are one mechanism to fund the dairy program, it is important for the state to also provide general fund dollars due to the direct impact the program has on the consuming public. KDA and this legislature deserves credit for recognizing the benefits of the program to the general citizenry of the state.

Additionally, it is important to note that there are some technical changes to the bill that need to be addressed. We have worked with KDA on those changes and are supportive of their proposed language.

Finally, we recognize that there may be some angst regarding the movement of the "imminent health hazard" language. We believe that this language change is simply an attempt to "clean up" the statute by the department; however, if the committee is more comfortable with leaving the language as it currently exists, we would be supportive of such an amendment as well. Importantly, KDA does need to have the ability to protect the consumer should a situation arise where swift action is necessary. We encourage the committee to ensure that such consumer protection is allowed. A safe product is necessary in order to protect the integrity of Kansas dairy products as a whole.

Mr. Chairman, again, thank you for the opportunity to express our support for SB 346. I will stand for questions at the appropriate time