

February 13, 2017

RE: Kansas Agricultural Growth Act

Kansas House Commerce, Labor, and Economic Development Committee:

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Jay D Coen. I am an agricultural producer and landowner in Morton County, Kansas. As a lifelong resident and third generation agricultural producer who's grandparents homesteaded in Morton County in 1913, my roots certainly run deep in our part of the world. As a child I remember stories of Elkhart and surrounding area being called the "Broom Corn Capitol" of the world. Since that time, the early part of the 20th century, producers have worked to provide other crops as well, including corn, wheat, cotton, grain sorghum, popcorn, and soybeans among others.

History has shown the resilience of Southwest Kansas producers as they survived many foes, including the "Dust Bowl days of the 1930's, the heat and drought of the 1950's as well as most recently the drought of the first 15 years of this century. Time and again producers have met each challenge, their operations evolving from Broom Corn Kings to producing the hybrid crops found today.

Over the past 100 years we have found that by hard work, investment of time and fortune, and many times thinking " Outside the Box", we have been able to provide for our families, invest in our communities, and enjoy the rural lifestyle we have come to love.

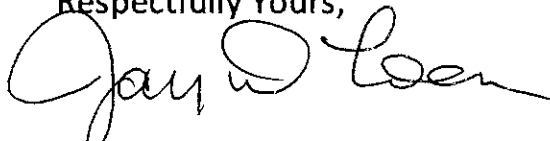
Fast forward with me please to Kansas Agriculture 2017. Today, many Kansas producers are finding that due to situations, many times out of their control, including low commodity prices, high input costs, continued dry weather patterns, as well as unknowns concerning Federal Farm Programs, it is becoming more difficult to produce at a profit. In Western Kansas especially, due to concerns of the depletion of the Ogallala aquifer, producers have continued to search for ways to produce more, using less of this precious natural resource.

Today, well into the 21st Century, once again we find ourselves meeting difficult challenges, much as our families have over the past 100 years. No longer can we rest on the accomplishments of our parents and grandparents as it becomes more obvious with each passing year, with each producer who can no longer make his land payments, with each young family leaving our struggling communities, that it is imperative that we once again " THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX".

Today, under consideration in this committee, is making possible the industrial production of Hemp by Kansas Agricultural producers. No longer is Broom Corn a viable product for our producers as it was 100 years ago, however industrial Hemp production, as an alternative, would require less input cost to producers, make less chemical application necessary helping to keep our environment clean for our children and grandchildren, and helping to conserve our water supply by growing a crop that requires considerably less water than some currently grown. Today, in this " Our Time", we have an opportunity to work together, as Kansans, to make a huge economic impact in our communities producing this commodity.

I would respectfully ask for your consideration in this committee, as well as the full body of the Kansas House to see this opportunity with new eyes, to be a leader in a new frontier of Kansas Agriculture, and to work hand in hand with producers to help make agriculture in Kansas viable far into the future. Kansas producers have shown time and time again that if given the chance, and with a little support, that great things can happen. I hope you as individuals, as well as in committee, will be willing to make this opportunity available, and to do your part to keep Kansas Agriculture strong.

Respectfully Yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jay D Coen". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name "Jay D Coen".

Jay D Coen

Elkhart, Kansas