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Date: January 22, 2020

To: Senator Caryn Tyson, Chair, Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee

From: Shahira Stafford, Kansas Cooperative Council

RE: Senate Bill 264 – removal of appraisers from eligibility list if terminated from a county

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on Senate Bill 264. The Kansas Cooperative Council (KCC) represents all types of cooperatively structured businesses across the state. The KCC exists to promote, support, and advance the interest, business success, and understanding of the agricultural, utility, credit, and consumer cooperatives and their members through legislation and regulatory efforts and education. Simply, co-ops differ from for-profit businesses because they are member-owned, member-controlled, democratically-governed, and business profits are returned directly to their members.

As you know, our agricultural cooperatives in particular have been battling against drastically high property taxes on their commercial grain storage facilities in recent years. The KCC, along with our friends at the Kansas Grain and Feed Association, are in continuous discussions with the Kansas Department of Revenue's Property Valuation Division (PVD) in making important revisions to their Grain Elevator Property Valuation Guide.

The KCC is in strong support of comprehensive property tax reform, and we believe that this bill has certain provisions that could benefit our members. **Senate Bill 264 would provide oversight to the PVD and allow them to remove appraisers from their approved list if they were terminated from the office of county or district appraiser in one or more counties.**

Our members are eager to work with and develop positive relationships with their county appraisers in ensuring their business is properly assessed. It is vital that those appraisers meet the required qualifications and are competent to do the job. It would be a disservice to Kansas taxpayers if unqualified appraisers are hired in another county unknowingly.

On behalf of the Kansas Cooperative Council, I appreciate the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 264 and request that when the committee considers the bill for action, you vote YES.