

To: House Agriculture Committee, Representative Ken Rahjes, Chair

From: Claudia Hissong, Kansas Farm Bureau

Date: February 3, 2022

Re: HB 2559 - Creating the Kansas Cotton Boll Weevil Program

Chairman Rahjes and members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2559. My name is Claudia Hissong, 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 cotton industry is smaller in comparison to other crop industries in Kansas but has seen significant growth and opportunity in recent years. The Kansas Department of Agriculture notes more than 400 active growers, several infrastructure investments, including four gins and a warehouse and acres planted increased to 175,000 acres in 2020, a 994% increase from 2015. As a cotton producing state, Kansas lacks a Boll Weevil management program that other cotton producing states have in place. Kansas is currently considered a Boll Weevil free state due to past eradication efforts and ongoing monitoring by a few cotton producers. However, an established, statewide program to monitor and trap the Boll Weevil is an important component to prevent a potentially devastating infestation in the future.

Kansas Farm Bureau members acknowledged the need for Kansas to implement a Boll Weevil management program and established policy stating, "we support a Boll Weevil monitoring and eradication program in Kansas."

Chairman Rahjes, thank you for the opportunity to express KFB's support of HB 2559. I will stand for questions at the appropriate time.