

PUBLIC POLICY STATEMENT

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

**RE: HB 2502 – relating to swine production facilities and
procedures**

**February 15, 2012
Topeka, Kansas**

**Testimony provided by:
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KFB Governmental Relations**

Chairman Taddiken and members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, thank you for the opportunity to appear today and discuss HB 2502. I am Brad Harrelson, Assistant Director—Governmental Relations for Kansas Farm Bureau. KFB is the state's largest general farm organization representing more than 40,000 farm and ranch families through our-105-county Farm-Bureau Associations.

We appreciate Secretary Rodman and the Department bringing this legislation forward. The debate of nearly twenty years ago established this public policy when the legislature approved a law that was balanced and placed decisions in the hands of local voters relative to location of certain livestock facilities. Kansas Farm Bureau policy continues to support this provision in law, and therefore we appear today as a neutral conferee on HB 2502.

Those emotional debates of the early 1990's were agonizing for some, challenging for many, and ultimately reasonable solutions evolved. Back then like today, production agriculture was a business, and should be recognized as such. But like all traditional business' - times change, people change, technology changes. Perhaps, attitudes and opinions regarding this particular issue have also changed. Therefore, Kansas Farm

Bureau believes it is fitting and appropriate that the Kansas legislature thoroughly review this policy.

In a time when rural areas of Kansas are desperate for economic growth and opportunity it is essential that potential barriers should be periodically examined. There have been many technological advances in the livestock industry in the last two decades, and maybe the need to differentiate between dairy and swine sectors is no longer the best approach when determining where a facility may locate. As we state in our policy, we are not suggesting the current law is necessarily bad, but a uniform process would seem to make more sense. The legislature has that opportunity to ask that very question now with HB 2502 which is before you. We believe it is worthy of your time and consideration.

Thank you.