



KANSAS RURAL CENTER

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February 4, 2025

To: House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources, Rep. Ken Rahjes, Chair

RE: Proponent Testimony for HB 2063 – Establishing a state conservation fund-

Dear Chairman Rahjes and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2063. The Kansas Rural Center has been working for over 45 years to promote sustainable agriculture, land stewardship, and rural community resilience. Through research, education, and advocacy, we support Kansas farmers and rural communities in implementing conservation practices that protect soil health, water quality, and biodiversity. We believe that responsible conservation efforts are essential to ensuring the long-term viability of our agricultural economy and the well-being of all Kansans.

As members of the Kansans for Conservation coalition, we have been involved in the collaborative drafting of HB 2063. This bill is a crucial step toward securing dedicated state conservation funding, which is necessary for maintaining and improving our natural resources. Currently, Kansas lacks such funding, putting our state at a disadvantage compared to the 35 states, including all four of our neighbors, that have already established dedicated conservation programs. Without this funding, Kansas misses out on significant federal and private matching dollars that could be invested in conservation initiatives benefiting our farmers, ranchers, and communities.

At the Kansas Rural Center, we have long worked closely with producers to implement conservation practices that build soil health, improve water management, and strengthen rural economies on their farms. However, the lack of state conservation funding limits the resources available to support these efforts. HB 2063 would provide much-needed financial support to expand conservation programs, increase access to technical assistance, and leverage federal and private funding to maximize impact.

The establishment of state conservation funding benefits all Kansans, ensures responsible stewardship of our natural resources, and allows Kansas to remain competitive for match opportunities. Therefore, we urge you to support HB 2063.

Sincerely,
Tom Buller
Executive Director
Kansas Rural Center