

January 21, 2026
Opponent Testimony
Written Only
HB 2476

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Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to HB 2476.

I oppose this bill because it fundamentally undermines accountability by providing what is, in effect, a liability shield for chemical and pesticide companies. **A functioning free market depends on responsibility.** When companies are insulated from liability, the incentive to prioritize safety, transparency, and continuous improvement is weakened. **Liability is not a punishment—it is a safeguard that protects the public and drives innovation toward safer products.**

History shows us exactly why liability matters.

In the 1950s, doctors and major institutions publicly promoted cigarettes as safe. Tobacco companies relied on “approved science” of the time to reassure the public. Imagine if, during that era, lawmakers had granted cigarette manufacturers a liability shield simply because their products complied with then-current regulations. Millions more lives would have been lost, and the truth about smoking would have been delayed even further. **Accountability through litigation was a key mechanism that exposed harm and forced change.**

Another powerful example is the Ford Pinto. When it became clear that the Pinto’s rear-mounted gas tank could explode upon impact, public pressure and legal liability forced Ford—and the entire auto industry—to change vehicle design standards. **If Ford had been shielded from liability because it met minimum regulatory requirements, would we still be driving cars with gas tanks placed where even minor collisions could kill occupants? Liability saved lives.**

HB 2476 moves us in the opposite direction. It suggests that regulatory approval should be the end of accountability. But regulation is not infallible. Standards change. Science evolves. What is considered “safe” today may be proven harmful tomorrow. The ability for harmed individuals to seek justice is a critical backstop when regulations fail or lag behind real-world impacts.

If we grant liability protection to pesticide and chemical companies, where does it end? Why not grant the same protection to pharmaceutical companies, manufacturers, or any industry whose products cause harm? Once we start removing accountability for one sector, we erode it for all.

This bill does not protect farmers or consumers—it protects corporations at the expense of the public. **Those who are harmed by products should retain the right to hold companies accountable when warranted.** That right is a cornerstone of consumer protection and public safety.

For these reasons, I urge you to reject HB 2476. We must not trade accountability for convenience, or public safety for corporate immunity.

Lastly, it appears this law is unnecessary as Kansas is already aligned with Federal Labeling laws.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Lauren Schiffman