



January 31, 2025

Kansas House of Representatives
House Education Committee
Kansas State Capitol
300 SW 10th Ave.
Topeka, KS 66612

Subject: Testimony in Support of Kansas House Bill 2103

Dear Chairperson Estes and Members of the House Education Committee,

On behalf of the Kansas State Fair Board, I am writing to express my strong support for Kansas House Bill 2103, which seeks to recognize participation in certain learning experiences and agricultural activities as valid excuses for school absences and grants school boards the authority to establish rules regarding such participation. This bill is an essential step toward ensuring that students engaged in agricultural education and experiential learning are not unfairly penalized for their involvement in programs that foster leadership, responsibility, and career development.

Organizations such as 4-H and the National FFA Organization (FFA) provide invaluable educational opportunities that extend well beyond the classroom. These programs teach students critical life skills, including public speaking, teamwork, financial management, and hands-on problem-solving. Participation in these programs helps students develop a strong work ethic, leadership abilities, and a passion for agriculture—an industry that is the backbone of our state's economy.

Students involved in 4-H and FFA engage in real-world experiences that prepare them for future careers in agriculture, business, science, and technology. They learn the importance of responsibility through raising and caring for animals, managing projects, and working with mentors and peers. Many of these students go on to become leaders in their communities, contributing to the agricultural workforce and advocating for the advancement of the industry.

Allowing students to receive excused absences for their participation in these educational experiences acknowledges the significance of agricultural education and supports the development of well-rounded, knowledgeable young adults. House Bill 2103 provides school districts with the flexibility to establish guidelines that encourage student participation in these programs without compromising their academic progress.

I urge you to support Kansas House Bill 2103 to recognize the value of experiential learning and ensure that students engaged in 4-H, FFA, and other agricultural education programs are afforded the opportunity to pursue their passions without unnecessary academic penalties. Thank you for your time and consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Bryan K. Schulz, IFMG, CFE
General Manager – Kansas State Fair