

**Chairwoman Susan Estes**

Education Committee  
Kansas Legislature  
Kansas State Capitol  
300 SW 10th Ave  
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Chairwoman Estes,

I am Linda Chase, a 27 year agriculture education teaching professional, currently teaching at Wellington High School. I serve as the chair of the Legislative Committee for the Kansas Association of Agricultural Educators (KAAE). On behalf of the KAAE, I am writing to offer support **HB 2103**, to include participation in specific learning experiences and agricultural activities as valid excuses for school absences.

I would highlight that **approved agricultural education programs, along with their intracurricular FFA component, regularly engage in valuable educational experiences outside of the regular attendance centers and traditional school day.** These competitions, tours, and conferences provide students with critical real-world skills, leadership development, and hands-on learning opportunities that complement classroom instruction. We recognize that effective agricultural education programs rely on a three-circle model for learners, with instruction and opportunities being delivered via the classroom and laboratory lessons, through membership and activities provided through the FFA, and finally, each student's independently developed Supervised Agricultural Experience or SAE.

That said, activities such as **4-H programs, supervised agricultural experiences (SAEs), industry apprenticeships, and agricultural fairs and events** also offer students practical skills, work ethic, and leadership training that prepare them for future careers. These experiences are not just extracurricular but are **essential extensions of agricultural education curricula** that directly align with career and technical education standards. Agriculture education is not taught in every school, therefore limiting those students who are not in a school district with Ag Education. These students however are active in 4-H or other agricultural activities and need the opportunity to be dismissed to participate in these activities as a learning extension of what they are doing.

Agriculture as you all know is the backbone of our state, if we are to continue our strong heritage we must help our younger generations build their skills, and leadership and guide their careers toward the agriculture industry. To do this we must allow students the opportunity to attend functions outside of school.

By passing **HB 2103**, the Kansas Legislature would affirm its commitment to **supporting students' educational growth beyond the classroom** and ensuring they are not penalized for participation in these meaningful, career-oriented learning opportunities. This is particularly important for students in rural areas who rely on these programs to develop critical skills and career pathways.

I urge the Education Committee to support this bill and recognize the importance of agricultural education and a variety of organizational vehicles delivering those lessons in shaping the future of Kansas. Thank you for your leadership and consideration. Please contact me if I can provide further insight or testimony in favor of HB 2103.

Sincerely,

*Linda Chase*

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