



Date: February 3, 2025
To: Chairwoman Susan Humphries, House Committee on Judiciary
From: Shahira Stafford, Kansas Cooperative Council
RE: Proponent Written Testimony on HCR 5008

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Kansas Cooperative Council (Co-op Council), thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Concurrent Resolution 5008.

Formed in 1944, the Co-op Council is a trade association representing all forms of cooperatively structured business in Kansas. Our purpose is to further the understanding of cooperative principals, methods of doing business, and the impact co-ops have on our state's rural economy. Kansas co-ops have over 575 locations, employ over 5,000 people, and represent over 116,000 members. Operating under the Kansas Cooperative Marketing Act, our cooperative businesses are unique in their structure – being member-owned, member-controlled, and democratically governed, with profits returned to member-owners.

The regulatory landscape facing our agricultural cooperatives has grown increasingly complex. Our members must comply with both state and federal regulations across multiple agencies governing grain storage, feed manufacturing, fertilizer handling, fuel storage, commercial pesticide operations, commercial vehicle operations, and workplace safety. Each new regulation or modification to existing rules can create compliance challenges and increased costs on our co-ops.

Our members are responsible for safely storing and handling millions of bushels of grain, managing fertilizer and crop protection products, and ensuring feed safety. These activities are fundamental to Kansas's agricultural production chain and food security, requiring careful oversight and responsible management. So, while we acknowledge the necessity of appropriate regulation in protecting public interests and ensuring safety in agricultural operations, we believe that legislative oversight is essential to ensure regulations align with legislative intent and don't create undue burdens as we serve Kansas farmers.

This constitutional amendment would establish a crucial check and balance, ensuring that executive branch agencies' rulemaking remains within the scope intended by the Legislature. It would provide a mechanism for legislative review of regulations that may exceed statutory authority or create unintended consequences for Kansas agricultural cooperatives and the rural communities they serve.

On behalf of the Kansas Cooperative Council, we strongly support HCR 5008 and respectfully request your favorable consideration of this important constitutional amendment. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.