



## **Ag Partners Cooperative**

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February 11, 2025

To: House Committee on Judiciary

From: Brice Elnicki, SVP Grain & Business Development. Ag Partners Cooperative Inc.

**Written Proponent Testimony**

Re: Proponent Testimony with Proposed Amendment on House Bill 2253, making the theft of livestock or implements of husbandry a severity level 5, nonperson felony.

Chairperson Humphries and Members of the Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written proponent testimony in support of House Bill 2253. This testimony is provided on behalf of Ag Partners Cooperative Inc.

Ag Partners Cooperative is a full-service, patron-owned cooperative serving more than 20 communities across northeast Kansas, southeast Nebraska, and northwest Missouri. For generations, we have worked alongside our patrons to support the agricultural industry and the communities we serve. The success of our grain business is fundamental not only to our organization but also to the economic vitality of these communities.

Agriculture is Kansas' largest economic driver and a primary employer in rural areas. Grain elevators play a crucial role by receiving, storing, and processing Kansas-grown grain, ensuring its quality and security.

Unfortunately, grain theft remains an issue, causing significant financial losses and proving difficult to prosecute due to its lower priority compared to other crimes.

House Bill 2253 increases criminal penalties for livestock and equipment theft. We respectfully request an amendment to include "grain theft" to strengthen deterrence and protect Kansas farmers and agribusinesses.

This bill represents sound public policy by enforcing necessary penalties to deter such crimes.

We urge the committee to amend the bill to include "grain theft" and pass it favorably as amended.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Brice Elnicki

SVP Grain & Business Development

Ag Partners Cooperative Inc.