



Kansas Grain and Feed Association
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February 13, 2025

To: House Committee on Judiciary
From: Randy Stookey, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs and General Counsel
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 provide testimony in support of House Bill 2253. This testimony is submitted on behalf of the Kansas Grain and Feed Association (KGFA).

KGFA is the state association of the grain receiving, storage, processing and shipping industry in Kansas. KGFA's membership includes over 950 Kansas business locations and represents 99% of the commercially licensed grain storage in the state.

As the largest economic driver in our state, agriculture affects the lives of every Kansan. Located in communities across our state, grain elevators work with Kansas farmers to receive, store, and process Kansas grown grain each year. Grain elevators are entrusted to safely store and maintain the condition of that grain for farmers, themselves, and the market. Their ability to securely store grain has a direct impact on the economic viability of those farmers and themselves.

Unfortunately, elevators experience grain theft. When such theft occurs, the losses from the theft can be quite significant for one company to absorb. In addition, it has proven difficult, at times, to secure prosecution of the cases due to the lower priority these crimes are given when weighed against more personal, violent, or drug-related crimes.

House Bill 2253 would provide for increased criminal penalties for the crime of the theft of livestock and implements of husbandry. In recognition of the difficulty our industry has experienced in prosecuting theft of grain, we would seek an amendment to the bill to include "grain theft". It is our hope that increasing the statutory penalties for the crime of grain theft will create a new deterrent effect on this criminal activity.

The provisions in House Bill 2253 represent good public policy. The bill provides for a reasonable increase in current criminal penalties and is necessary to deter future crimes of this nature.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 2253. We respectfully request that the committee amend the bill to add "grain theft," and then pass the bill out favorably, as amended.