



Since 1894



Date: March 6, 2025

To: Senate Committee on Utilities, Chairman Fagg

From: Jackie Garagiola, Associate Counsel, Kansas Livestock Association  
Claudia Hisson, State Affairs Manager, Kansas Farm Bureau

Re: **HB 2107 Providing for claims to recover damages from fire events caused by electric public utilities, specifying recovery for such damages and requiring the state corporation commission to provide trainings on wildfire risk and mitigation.**

Position: Neutral, Written Only

*The Kansas Livestock Association (KLA), formed in 1894, is a trade association representing more than 5,700 members on legislative and regulatory issues. KLA members are involved in many aspects of the livestock industry, including seed stock, cow-calf, and stocker cattle production; cattle feeding; dairy production; swine production; grazing land management; and diversified farming operations.*

*Kansas Farm Bureau (KFB) is the state's largest general farm organization representing more than 30,000 farm and ranch families through our 105 county Farm Bureau associations.*

Thank you, Chairman Fagg, and members of the Committee, for allowing the Kansas Livestock Association (KLA) and Kansas Farm Bureau (KFB) the opportunity to share our views on HB 2107 which would limit the recovery of punitive damages during a wildfire event and require the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC) to convene a workshop on wildfire risks and utility mitigation efforts.

We appreciate the efforts made by the House Energy, Utilities, and Telecommunications Committee to improve this bill to its current, amended form. The House made two amendments that bring us to a neutral position today. First, changing the statute of limitations to begin on the date of the damage from the fire event. We feel this best reflects when a landowner is aware of damage to their property due to wildfire and aligns with insurance claims. Second, removing the formula for calculating the award damages. We have concerns defining this in statute could have unintended consequences and is best left for the courts to determine as is current practice.

The legislation also requires the KCC to convene a workshop on wildfire risks and mitigation. Our organizations take wildfires very seriously, as the impact on our members' land, homes and operations can be immense. We support an effort to mitigate these risks in relation to public utilities.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide some background on this legislation and explain our neutral position on HB 2107 as amended.