

Jillian Keller, 15 – Piqua, KS
Iola FFA and Southwind District 4H Member
Testifying For SB415

My support for Senate Bill No 415 comes from being an active member in the City Slickers 4H Club and the Iola FFA. I've been attending and showing livestock at the Kansas State Fair since I was 9 years old. I feel these funds for capital improvements will benefit not only the Kansas State Fair but every 4H and FFA member in Kansas. It is the largest event for us to exhibit our projects each year. We work long and hard and set many goals with our projects, exhibiting and being competitive at the Kansas State Fair is always one of mine. Keeping the fairgrounds in top shape will continue to allow us to promote not only 4H and FFA but all of Kansas agriculture and industries. It also provides fair goers education and entertainment of our fine state.

In my seven years of exhibiting at the state fair I have learned many life lessons that I use now and will use all throughout life. Through 4H, FFA and the State Fair, teamwork, leadership, decision making, project development and so many other skills are now in my repository. It also has granted me the privilege to meet and make numerous friends and contacts.

One of my most memorable experiences was participating in the Legislative Showmanship. I enjoyed teaching my representative how to show a goat. And, just so you all know, we made the top 5.

I've also been able to expand my leadership skills through the Kansas State Fair to others across the United States. Two years ago I was fortunate to win both Jr Sheep and Goat Showmanship. This qualified me to join the You Got to Believe Clinic's Showmanship Team. YGB takes state and national showmanship champions from across the United States and puts on clinics for other 4H and FFA members to learn and enhance their skills showing sheep and goats. This past summer I traveled to 7 different states teaching kids how to better their skills and to enhance their project. This provided me to put all I've learned to work for others and allowed me to learn and development my skills even more.

4H, FFA and the Kansas State Fair have created a lifetime of opportunities for me, like it has for so many others. It has made me more self-confident by leading and being a mentor who sets goals and won't stop until I succeed. I'm now able to speak in front of crowds and educate on our organizations and industry. Without these programs I don't believe I would have had the courage to do half the experiences I have had.

Supporting Senate Bill 415 will help enhance and grow the Kansas State Fair's capital improvements which will in turn continue helping Kansas 4H and FFA create future leaders to better this great state.