

Good morning, everyone. It's so great to see some familiar faces. Thanks to the Agriculture Business Council of Kansas City for having me back.

You've got an amazing lineup of speakers ahead, and I'm glad those of you visiting from out of town get to experience everything the KC area has to offer — including our world-famous barbecue. Don't leave without trying it!

For those of you I haven't met yet, I'm Sharice Davids, and I represent Kansas' Third District in Congress.

When I was first elected back in 2018, which seems like decade ago, the Kansas Third looked a lot different.

Since then, it's grown to include more rural and agriculturally driven communities.

That's one of the reasons I sought a spot on the Agriculture Committee: to make sure every community I represent — from Olathe to Ottawa — has a voice at the table.

I'll be the first to say, I didn't grow up in agriculture. My path to Congress was a little unconventional compared to my colleagues.

I was raised by a single mom who served in the Army for 20 years. She taught me about service, hard work, and showing up even when things are tough.

Those lessons feel a lot like the values I hear from our farmers and ranchers: resilience, dedication, and looking out for the next generation.

When I joined the Ag Committee, I started a Farm Bill listening tour. I wanted to learn directly from producers about what was working, and what wasn't.

And let's be honest: a lot has changed since the last time I spoke to this group.

We've got a new administration in Washington, a challenging budget environment, and big questions about whether Congress can still come together and get things done.

But I remain hopeful, because agriculture has always been one of those rare areas where bipartisanship isn't just nice to have — it's absolutely necessary.

Some of you may have been at my roundtable conversation last year where we heard from stakeholders across Kansas — from Farm Bureau to Farmers Union to our commodity groups — and former Senator Pat Roberts, who chaired the Agriculture Committee for years.

Senator Roberts put it best: he said working on four Farm Bills taught him lawmakers — urban and rural, conservative and liberal — had to set aside differences and reach across the aisle.

He went on to say, and I quote, "Unfortunately, that is not the most important question we see today in the House of Representatives."

And he's right — Washington is too divided and we need lawmakers to get serious and come together to get things done.

That's the spirit I've had during my Farm Bill conversations.

My priorities for a long-term, bipartisan package have included:

- protecting and improving crop insurance,
- strengthening our supply chains to lower grocery costs,
- investing in agricultural research,
- making sure USDA programs actually work for Kansans, and
- protecting nutrition programs like SNAP that keep families fed.

That's what I've been hearing on my listening tours, and that's what I'll keep pushing for.

Now, talking about the agriculture provisions that were included in the reconciliation bill from a few months ago.

While the Republican budget included some improvements for the farm safety net, it also made deep, harmful cuts to health care that will hurt millions of hardworking, everyday families and upended the traditional Farm Bill coalition by cutting nearly \$200 billion from the Nutrition Title.

On top of that, it also put six rural hospitals across Kansas at risk of closure at a time when these facilities are already at risk of shutting their doors.

I came to Congress to support working Kansans, not to make life harder for them — that's why I couldn't support it.

For a path forward, I hope to hear from my Republican colleagues: what their process is going to look like and whether Democratic members will have any input.

I look forward to having those conversations.

I also want to mention another critical issue: trade. Last month, I sat down with a group of producers for a roundtable on international markets.

The folks I spoke with shared concerns that reckless tariffs were eliminating potential buyers for American goods.

For example, Marnie, who owns a soybean farm in Lyons and Osage Counties recently reached out to my office saying:

“This will be a good soybean harvest. But most of our beans are sold to China. If they decide not to buy — or only buy at below-market prices — we could be in real trouble. We don’t even have enough storage for all those beans.”

That’s the reality of tariff whiplash and trade wars. Uncertainty hurts.

When overseas markets close, farmers lose billions in sales. Further, tariffs are increasing already high input costs. And many producers still haven’t fully recovered from the last round of tariffs. We cannot afford to repeat that mistake.

We also can’t ignore the role of biofuels in our ag economy.

I’ve supported year-round E-15 sales because they lower gas prices for families and support our corn producers.

I saw firsthand through conversations with and visits to East Kansas Agri-Energy, an ethanol plant in Garnett, KS.

Bill Pracht and his team showed me how biofuels are helping to diversify and strengthen our rural economies.

That's the kind of innovation I want to keep supporting in Congress.

I've also been focused on agricultural supply chains, and recently went on a supply chain tour across the Third District, from farms to kitchen incubators to local grocery stores.

What I heard was clear: when we buy local, we save money.

Cutting out domestic and international shipping network means fewer middlemen, less spoilage, and more affordable food at the checkout line.

This isn't just good for farmers — it's good for Kansas families trying to keep grocery bills under control.

And that's why I've sponsored legislation in Congress like the *Resilient Food Supply Chain and Affordability Act* to strengthen our ag supply chain right here at home.

I take this work seriously and have focused on having as many conversations as possible since getting on the Ag committee.

Last year, I was honored to earn the Kansas Farm Bureau's endorsement.

That endorsement didn't come because I have all the answers — but because I show up, listen, and put in the work.

That's what Kansans deserve. Even when I sit down with folks who didn't vote for me, or who don't agree with me on everything, I represent all of my constituents.

Agriculture has been the backbone of Kansas for generations.

It's our largest economic sector, it feeds our families, and it feeds the world.

At a time when Washington feels divided, I think agriculture offers a roadmap: set aside the partisan games, listen to the people doing the work on the ground, and get something done.

That's what I'll keep fighting for on the Ag Committee, and that's what I'll keep fighting for in Congress.

Thank you — and I'm looking forward to answering a few questions.