

To: House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
Rep. Larry Powell, Chair

From: Kansas Livestock Association
Kansas Dairy Association

Presented by: Aaron Popelka, Vice President of Legal and Governmental Affairs, Kansas Livestock Association

Subject: HB 2503, an act concerning agriculture; relating to agricultural boards and advisory bodies; amending K.S.A. 2011 Supp. 2-3709, 74-552, 74-553, 74-555 and 74-50,163 and repealing the existing sections; also repealing K.S.A. 74-551.

Chairman Powell and members of the Committee, my name is Aaron Popelka and I am with the Kansas Livestock Association. My testimony today represents the joint views of the Kansas Livestock Association (KLA) and the Kansas Dairy Association (KDA). We would like to take this opportunity to share with the Committee our views on Sec. 4 of HB 2503. Sec. 4 amends K.S.A. § 74-555 that creates and governs the Dairy Marketing Advisory Board.

It is our opinion the continued existence of the Dairy Marketing Advisory Board is unnecessary. Rather than amend the statute to change the duties of the Board, our organizations would support repeal of K.S.A. § 74-555 in its entirety, eliminating the Dairy Marketing Advisory Board.

The original Board was created to examine whether or not the State of Kansas should establish and implement a statewide milk marketing order. Today, most of the United States is governed by federal milk marketing orders set up on a regional basis. Therefore, the original need for the board is no longer necessary.

While we appreciate the Kansas Department of Agriculture's efforts to define a new role for the Board, our membership feels it is in the best interest of the Kansas dairy industry to simply dissolve the board. Each of the new advisory roles set forth for the Board in HB 2503 are currently performed by the Kansas Board of Agriculture, Kansas Animal Health Board, the dairy checkoff, or producer advocacy groups like the KLA and KDA.

In addition, our members have a shared concern that should a future administration be elected, less friendly to the agriculture industry than the Brownback Administration, the seats on the Board could be filled by industry representatives outside the views of the mainstream dairy industry. This could provide an opportunity for the Board to rubber stamp future administrative policy decisions adverse to the Kansas dairy industry. We would also like to note, repeal of this section fits into the Office of the Repealer's mandate to eliminate unnecessary statutes.

For the foregoing reasons, it is the recommendation of the KLA and KDA that HB 2503 be amended so that it repeals K.S.A. § 74-555, dissolving the Dairy Marketing Advisory Board. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.