

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dan Johnson at 3:30 p.m. on April 4, 2002, in Room 243-N of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Representative Flora - excused
Representative Hayzlett - excused
Representative Larkin - excused
Representative Light - excused
Representative O'Brien - excused

Committee staff present: Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research Department
Gordon Self, Revisor of Statutes
Kay Scarlett, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Leslie Kaufman, Associate Director, Public Policy Division, Kansas Farm Bureau
David Pfrang, cattle producer, Nemaha County
Ginny Pfrang, cattle producer, Nemaha County
Donn Teske, President, Kansas Farmers Union
Mike Schultz, Kansas Cattlemen's Association (written only)
Mike Beam, Governmental Affairs Staff, Kansas Livestock Association
Greg Foley, Assistant Secretary, Kansas Department of Agriculture
Kansas Association of Conservation Districts (written only)

Others attending: See attached list

Hearing on SCR 1615 - Concurrent Resolution urging Congress to enact country of origin labeling.

Chairman Johnson opened the hearing on **SCR 1615**. Raney Gilliland explained that **SCR 1615**, introduced at the request of the 2001 Special Committee on Agriculture, was identical to the amendment made to **HCR 5037** on the House floor. The resolution would urge Congress to include in its current work on the farm bill a requirement that would result in country of origin labeling of certain beef, lamb, pork, farm-raised fish, and perishable agricultural commodities or peanuts when its country of origin is the United States.

Janet McPherson, on behalf of Leslie Kaufman, Associate Director, Public Policy Division, Kansas Farm Bureau, appeared in support of **SCR 1615** to require mandatory country of origin labeling. (Attachment 1)

David Pfrang, a cattle producer and farmer from Nemaha County, testified in favor of **SCR 1615** and mandatory country of origin labeling. (Attachment 2)

Ginny Pfrang, Nemaha County, appeared in support of mandatory country of origin labeling and **SCR 1615**. (Attachment 3)

John Rempe, on behalf of Don Teske, President, Kansas Farmers Union, expressed support for **SCR 1615** and mandatory country of origin labeling. (Attachment 4)

Ginny Pfrang read written testimony submitted by Mike Schultz, Kansas Cattlemen's Association, in support of **SCR 1615** and mandatory country of origin labeling. (Attachment 5)

Mike Beam, Governmental Affairs Staff, Kansas Livestock Association, expressed KLA's concerns in regard to **SCR 1615**. He discussed pending federal legislation and reported that although many KLA and National Cattlemen's Beef Association members believe federal labeling legislation is warranted, the consensus is to oppose mandatory country of origin labeling in favor of voluntary USA labeling. (Attachment 6)

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE on April 4, 2002, in Room 243-N of the Capitol.

There being no other conferees, the hearing on **SCR 1615** was closed.

Hearing on SB 436 - Fees and inspections of dams, levees, and other water obstructions.

Chairman Johnson opened the hearing on **SB 436**. Raney Gilliland reviewed the bill, as amended in the Senate, concerning proposed changes in current statutes that regulate flood plain fill and levees, dams, and channel changes or stream obstructions. He explained the Water Structures Program policy changes and new fees this bill would establish. All fees collected would be deposited in a Water Structures Fund to be created by this legislation. The original bill was similar to **HB 2689** heard in committee on January 28.

Proposed technical amendments to **SB 436** were submitted by the revisor. (Attachment 7)

Joe Lawhon, Legislative Division of Post Audit, reported on the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the completed performance audit, *Department of Agriculture: Reviewing the Water Structures Program*, March, 2002. He discussed recommendations for making the Water Structures Program more efficient, effective, and accountable. Copies of the performance audit report are available from the Legislative Division of Post Audit.

Greg Foley, Assistant Secretary, Kansas Department of Agriculture, presented testimony in support of **SB 436** and provided an overview of the bill as amended in the Senate. He reported that **SB 436**, as amended, addressed many of the policy issues outlined in the post audit report. (Attachment 8)

Greg Foley and David Pope, Chief Engineer, Water Resources Program, Kansas Department of Agriculture, answered committee questions.

The Kansas Association of Conservation Districts submitted written testimony expressing their concerns with **SB 436** in regard to the permit procedures required for very shallow water areas developed through the USDA Wetlands Reserve Program and through other state and local conservation programs. (Attachment 9)

As there were no other conferees, the hearing on **SB 436** was closed.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for April 10, 2002.