

Kansas Federation of Animal Owners

Testimony on HB2477 – Opponent

Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee hearing – March 8, 2018

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Chairman Kerschen and Committee,

HB 2477 was introduced this session as a “fee-schedule” bill to address concerns of the KDA that funding for the inspection program under AFI was not sufficient to maintain current staffing and services. Additional impetus for the bill was provided by livestock interests concerned that funds allocated to the Animal Health Division went disproportionately to the AFI program.

The Kansas Federation of Animal Owners testified as a neutral conferee on HB 2477 in the House Agriculture Committee in January. We did so because the bill addressed primarily the fee schedule and only slightly modified licensee categories. We feel strongly that maintaining the distinction between “retail breeders” and dually-licensed USDA/KDA wholesale breeders is in the best interests of the AFI program and these Kansas businesses as it allows a more accurate assessment of where issues arise among licensee categories.

We appear today as opposing HB 2477. Floor amendments in the House changed the very nature of the bill. The fee schedule that came out of House Ag was modified on the floor to favor certain categories of licensees. While dually licensed USDA/KDA breeders face a potential increase of 150% under the new cap, one category of shelters will see their license fee decrease and fosters will see their fee eliminated.

The House amendment also micromanages the AFI program and substitutes “one-size-fits-all” statutory mandates for realistic policies developed in rules and regs. Exorbitant fines mandated for not meeting rigidly defined logistical requirements jeopardize small businesses while burdening inspectors with requirements only marginally relevant to their core mission. The House amendments need to be removed – or the bill scrapped.

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