

**Testimony in Support of HB 2451
to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources
by Dr. Andy Hawkins, Assistant Animal Health Commissioner
Kansas Department of Agriculture
March 10, 2020**

Good morning Chairman Kerschen and members of the committee. I am Dr. Andy Hawkins and I serve as Assistant Animal Health Commissioner for the Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA). Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 2451.

HB 2451 addresses two minor issues in our current animal health statutes: 1) license, permit, and registration renewal deadlines; and 2) Official Calhhood Vaccination (OCV) tags.

First, HB 2451 would change the license, permit and registration renewal deadlines from June 30 to September 30 for most large animal programs administered by KDA including feedlot licenses, public livestock markets, etc. Due to an upgrade to an online renewal system and several budget provisos to allow the use of a September 30 deadline, KDA has been using the September 30 renewal deadline for the past several years. HB 2451 would align the large animal programs with deadlines associated with the Animal Facilities Inspection Program, which were changed to September 30 in 2018.

Second, OCV tags are a form of official identification under state and federal law applied by a licensed accredited veterinarian at the time of vaccination for brucellosis signifying that the heifer has been vaccinated. These tags are considered accountable property and are only available directly to licensed accredited veterinarians from either the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) or KDA.

There are two forms of OCV tags: metal orange OCV clip tags and orange OCV Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) button tags. Currently, USDA supplies the metal OCV tags free of charge, but in an effort to offer updated technology, KDA is making RFID tags available to Kansas veterinarians for a charge directly associated with the actual cost of providing the tag. KDA provides approximately 3,100 tags to licensed accredited veterinarians each year.

As a recognized leader in promoting and enhancing animal disease traceability, KDA has distributed the RFID tags for the last four years. In the first two years, KDA secured USDA Cooperative Agreement funds, therefore providing an initial supply at no cost to veterinarians. After funding ceased, KDA maintained its commitment to animal disease traceability efforts by supplying RFID tags for purchase. KDA has worked closely with tag distributors to secure tags at the lowest price points. The actual cost of the RFID tag averages around \$1.41. KDA would like to provide RFID tags as OCV tags, but per current statute, the cost for OCV tags shall not exceed \$0.25 per tag,

which would require KDA to distribute RFID tags at loss. HB 2451 would address the technology advancement of RFID tags and their associated cost, versus the basic metal clip tags and their potential perceived cost when the original statute was enacted.

In summary, HB 2451 sets September 30 as the license, permit, and registration renewal deadline for KDA's large animal programs and provides KDA the ability to recover the actual cost associated with providing RFID tags for OCV use as we continue promoting and enhancing animal disease traceability within the state of Kansas and beyond.