

MINUTES OF THE SENATE AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Dan Kerschen at 8:30 am on Thursday, March 17, 2022, in room 144-S of the Capitol.

All members were present

Committee staff present:

Elaina Rudder, Legislative Research Department
Heather O'Hara, Legislative Research Department
Judy Marks, Committee Assistant
Tamera Lawrence, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Mike Beam-Secretary, Kansas Department of Agriculture
Jasmine Kyle- Southeast Kansas Humane Society
Crystal Swan Blackdeer- Leavenworth County Humane Society
Terry Humphrey- Stray Dog Policy
Ginger Barr-private citizen
Lorilee Thomas- Puppies Extraordinaire
Michelle Russell- Kansas Pet Professionals
Sharon Munk-BJ's and Guys LLC
Aaron Popelka-Kansas Livestock Association

Others in attendance:

No list available

Hearing on: SB551 — Establishing the division of pet animal facilities inspection within the department of agriculture under the administration of the pet animal facilities director.

Chairperson Kerschen opened the hearing on **SB551**.

Tamera Lawrence with the Revisor of Statutes Office explained the bill. She explained that the bill would establish the Pet Animal Facilities Inspection Program with the Kansas Department of Agriculture. The division would be a continuation of the existing Animal Facilities Inspection Program and would be administered by a director appointed the Secretary of Agriculture and the supervision of the Secretary.

Mike Beam spoke in favor of the bill. He believes that placing the pet animal inspection function into a separate division allows the Department of Agriculture to more easily track appropriate costs and receipts associated with each function and reduce the reliance of livestock industry fees to prop up the pet animal facilities inspection function. ([Attachment 1](#))

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES of the Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources at 8:30 am on Thursday, March 17, 2022, in room 144-S of the Capitol.

Midge Grinstead, on behalf of Jasmine Kyle, testified in support of the bill. She presented the committee with a resolution signed by approximately sixty organizations that support this bill. It is the belief of these agencies that passage of this bill will protect pets and serve Kansas communities. ([Attachment 2](#))

Crystal Swan Blackdeer spoke in support of the bill. She believes that a robust and empowered Pet Animal Facilities Inspection Division will provide trained inspectors who will be able to inspect, advise, and train all licensees on a schedule that makes sense. Pet animal health will be improved and suffering will dramatically decrease. ([Attachment 3](#))

Terry Humphrey testified in favor of the bill. She told the committee that separating pet animals and livestock recognizes their inherent different purposes and allows those with the expertise in pet animals to focus on operating the division effectively and elevating the pet animal industry in Kansas. ([Attachment 4](#))

Ginger Barr spoke as a proponent of the bill. She believes that since pet animals like dogs and cats are brought into people's homes, their needs are different from animals like cattle, hogs, etc. A separate division is needed to address their needs. ([Attachment 5](#))

Written proponent testimony was submitted by:

Vanessa Cowie- Prairie Paws Animal Shelter ([Attachment 6](#))

Kelly Bogner- member Kansas Pet Advisory Board ([Attachment 7](#))

Nick Orebaugh-Kansas Animal Control ([Attachment 8](#))

Midge Grinstead- Humane Society of the United States ([Attachment 9](#))

Lorilee Thomas testified in opposition to the bill. She believes that the Kansas Department of Agriculture should use their funds to hire and give raises as they proposed to do upon receiving enhancements and then show the necessity of why there should be a stand alone division. ([Attachment 10](#)) ([Attachment 11](#))

Michelle Russell spoke against the bill. She does not see any clearly stated compelling reason to create a stand alone division. Why replace a clear-cut chain of command with exceptions, cooperation and consultation. ([Attachment 12](#))

Sharon Munk testified as an opponent of the bill. She believes her organization needs to stay with the Animal Health Commissioner, if for no other reason, to protect it from the animal rights organizations.

Unless specifically noted, the individual remarks recorded herein have not been transcribed verbatim. Individual remarks as reported herein have not been submitted to the individuals appearing before the committee for editing or corrections.

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[\(Attachment 13\)](#)

Aaron Popelka opposes the bill because he believes it places animal health programs at risk and is an unnecessary growth of government.[\(Attachment 14\)](#)

Written opponent testimony was submitted by:

Greg Smith-Kansas Pet Advisory Board[\(Attachment 15\)](#)

Kendra Titus-Animal Advisory Board for licensed breeders[\(Attachment 16\)](#)

Laura Morland -Pet Advisory Committee[\(Attachment 17\)](#)

Kansas Pet Professional Petition[\(Attachment 18\)](#)

Chairperson Kerschen turned the meeting over to Vice-Chairperson Ron Ryckman.

After a brief discussion between committee members and conferees, Vice-Chairperson Ryckman closed the hearing on **SB551** and adjourned the meeting.