

## MINUTES OF THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dan Johnson at 3:30 p.m. on March 14, 2005, in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

### Committee staff present:

Raney Gilliland, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Gordon Self, Revisor of Statutes Office  
Kay Scarlett, Committee Secretary

### Conferees appearing before the committee:

Kevin Neuman, Overland Park, Kansas  
Gary Guccione, Executive Director, National Greyhound Association  
Craig Randle, Inspector for the National Greyhound Association  
Steve Ward, Kansas Greyhound Association  
John Watson, Director, Trade Development Division, Kansas Department of Commerce

### Others attending:

See attached list.

Minutes of the March 2, 7, and 9 meetings were distributed. Members were asked to notify the committee secretary of any corrections or additions prior to Wednesday, March 16, or the minutes will be considered approved as presented.

Chairman Johnson stated that unless there was objection from the committee, he planned to concur with Senate amendments to **HCR 5005** urging the USDA to reconsider the United States rule on cattle imports from Canada. The Senate Committee of the Whole amended the resolution to:

- Add as another reason for the resolution the fact that Japan has failed to abide by the October 23, 2004, agreement and meet its trade obligation under the agreement;
- Change the word “apply” to “impose” with relation to economic sanctions which may be necessary in further opening all world markets; and
- Add the United States Trade Representative as one of the recipients of the resolution.

There was no committee objection to concurring with the Senate amendments to **HCR 5005**.

### Hearing on HB 2508 - Application of Kansas Pet Animal Act to greyhounds

Chairman Johnson opened the hearing on **HB 2508**. Raney Gilliland explained that **HB 2508** would make a change in the definition section of the Kansas Pet Animal Act. The bill would remove the exclusion of greyhounds from the definition of “dog” on page 2, lines 7 and 8; thereby, making greyhounds subject to the Kansas Pet Animal Act.

Kevin Neuman, Overland Park, Kansas, a greyhound owner and advocate, appeared in support of **HB 2508** to recognize a greyhound as a dog. He provided a brief history of the greyhound breed and its exclusion from being considered a canine in Kansas. He noted that no other state excludes a greyhound from the definition of a dog. As attendance at greyhound racing tracks around the United States decreases, he believes it is even more important that the State of Kansas recognize a greyhound as a dog to be protected by the Kansas Pet Animal Act. (Attachment 1)

Gary Guccione, Executive Director, National Greyhound Association, testified in opposition to **HB 2508**. He provided background information about the greyhound industry, stating that Dickinson County, with Abilene as its county seat, is the largest greyhound-producing county in the United States; that Abilene is not only the home of the National Greyhound Association, but also the home of the Greyhound Hall of Fame. He emphasized that NGA-registered greyhounds are bred and raised exclusively for the purpose of racing—just

## CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE House Agriculture Committee at 3:30 p.m. on March 14, 2005, in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

as race horses, that are also exempt from the Kansas Pet Animal Act. He noted that greyhounds that are retired from the sport or that do not make the grade at the racetrack are either retired back to the farm for breeding purposes or placed in homes as pets. These pet greyhounds are spayed and neutered before placement, thus cannot be used for commercial breeding purposes. He stated that greyhounds are not bred to be wholesaled, either in Kansas or out-of-state, again the greyhound breeding industry closely parallels the horse-race industry. He reported that all greyhound farms in Kansas are subject to regular inspection, not only by NGA, but also by the Kansas Greyhound Registry. A copy of a letter from Gerald Rodman, KGA's full-time inspector, is included with his testimony. He stated that because of the unique nature of the industry and the strict requirements and tough penalty provisions, the current system of regulation is working. (Attachment2)

Craig Randle, Inspector for the National Greyhound Association, appeared in opposition to **HB 2508**. He reported that he has 60 part-time inspectors throughout the country that support him in his responsibilities. He explained that their inspections are unannounced, and while the condition of the greyhounds is paramount, inspectors also consider the condition and cleanliness of the facilities. Greyhound farms are inspected annually, with follow-up inspections if conditions warrant. He included a copy of the NGA Inspection Report Form and NGA Inspection Guidelines with his testimony. (Attachment 3)

Steve Ward, Kansas Greyhound Association, testified in opposition to **HB 2508**, stating that the language in question only applies to greyhounds which are registered with the National Greyhound Registry, not all dogs of the greyhound breed. He said the language stricken on page two of the bill would add an additional layer of inspection and supervision to an industry which is already subject to multiple layers of regulation and inspection. He also included a copy of the statement by Gerald Rodman, official inspector for the Kansas Greyhound Registry, noting that the Registry operates under the supervision of the Kansas Racing and Gaming Commission. He explained that before a greyhound owner can have an animal race in Kansas, he or she must apply for a racing license with the state racing and gaming commission and must submit fingerprints to the KBI and FBI for background checks. (Attachment 4)

There being no other conferees, the hearing on **HB 2508** was closed.

### **Hearing on HCR 5016 - Concurrent Resolution supporting a Taiwan-United States trade agreement**

Chairman Johnson opened the hearing on **HCR 5016**. Raney Gilliland explained the resolution in support of a Taiwan-United States free trade agreement.

John Watson, Director, Trade Development Division, Kansas Department of Commerce, appeared in support of **HCR 5016** and a Taiwan-United States free trade agreement. He stated that exports are vital to the health of the Kansas economy and building strong trading partners among the countries of the world is good public policy for Kansas. He reported that Taiwan is an excellent customer for Kansas wheat, beef and manufactured goods, with total exports placing Taiwan as the 16<sup>th</sup> largest partner of Kansas. He said that adoption of the resolution will send a strong signal to our customers that Taiwan is a valued partner and customer of Kansas. He reported that in recognition of the importance of the Taiwan market, the department reopened a Taiwan office in May of 2004.

Mr. Watson reported that Kansas is home of an industry leader with strong Taiwan ties. The Garmin Corporation of Olathe, a world-class manufacturer of global positioning systems for both recreational and aerospace application, is a good example of how Taiwan entrepreneurs have flourished by establishing a base of operations in Kansas. This means more employment opportunities in the future for Kansans. The Kansas Department of Commerce supports this resolution. (Attachment 5)

Mr. Joseph Chang of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office was in attendance. It was noted that this resolution was introduced at the request of the Taiwan delegation.

As there were no other conferees, the hearing on **HCR 5016** was closed.

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for March 16, 2005.