

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Sharon Schwartz at 3:30pm on Thursday, January 22, 2015, 346-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Basil Dannebohm – Excused

Representative Tom Sloan – Excused

Committee staff present:

Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research Department

Joanna Wochner, Legislative Research Department

Shirley Jepson, Kansas Legislative Committee Assistant

Natalie Scott, Office of Revisor of Statutes

David Wiese, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Dr. Bill Brown, Kansas Livestock Commissioner

Kendal Lothman, Special Agent, Attorney General's Office

Others in attendance:

[See Attached List](#)

Bill Introductions

There were no bill introductions.

Presentation on:

Dr. Bill Brown, Kansas Livestock Commissioner, appeared before the Committee to present an update on livestock brands in the state. Dr. Brown noted that branding as a form of identification of cattle was set in statute in 1939. Dr. Brown stated that the Department must maintain all brand applications made since 1939.

Presently, the application process for a brand has been digitized and application can be made online - application for a brand has a fee of \$45 with the brand good for 5 years before renewal is necessary. Dr. Brown noted that there are 17,500 brands presently registered. There are also six places to locate the brand on an animal allowing the same brand to be used six times in different locations on the animal.

The Commissioner stated that the Commission partners with the Attorney General's office in working to locate stolen cattle.

Dr. Brown responded to questions from the Committee.

Kendal Lothman, Special Agent, Attorney General's Office, presented testimony on branding and cattle rustling ([Attachment 1](#)). Mr. Lothman stated the new Livestock/Brand Investigation Unit was created by the Kansas Attorney General after entering into a joint agreement with the Department of Agriculture to increase efforts to combat cattle theft in the state. The Unit will investigate felony

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livestock thefts, felony livestock pharmaceutical thefts and felony brand violations.

Mr. Lothman noted that livestock theft is a widespread issue across the nation. Kansas has approximately 5.8 million head of cattle within the state and 48 livestock markets with approximately 2,146,160 cattle sold in 2013. Only six of the livestock markets in the state do brand inspection, allowing stolen livestock to be easily sold through the market place.

Mr. Lothman responded to questions from the Committee.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 pm. The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for Monday, January 26, 2015.