

MINUTES OF THE SENATE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Larry Powell at 8:30am on Tuesday, March 08, 2016, 159-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Senator Michael O'Donnell – Excused
Senator Dan Kerschen – Excused

Committee staff present:

Tamera Lawrence, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Heather O'Hara, Legislative Research Department
Toni Beck, Kansas Legislative Committee Assistant
Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research Department

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Chad Bontrager, Department of Agriculture
Leslie Kaufman, Kansas Cooperative Council, Grain and Feed, Agribusiness Retailers Association
Nick Reinecker, Kansas Citizen

Others in attendance:

[See Attached List](#)

Hearing and possible action on: HB2490 — Allowing the secretary of the Kansas department of agriculture to contain chemical toxins and other plant pests for the protection of the public health.

Chairman Powell opened the hearing on the bill; Tamera Lawrence presented an overview to the committee.

Chad Bontrager presented information in support of the bill to update and add toxicants to the text in protecting plant products from pest and disease outbreaks. The update would include chemical toxicants, including agricultural chemicals or biological substances which if present in unsafe levels, render a plant unsafe for human or animal consumption. ([Attachment 1](#))

Leslie Kaufman presented testimony in support of the bill stating the changes would enable the Secretary of Agriculture to take actions to prevent contaminated crops for reaching our grain storage facilities and potentially contaminating thousands of bushels of non-contaminated grain. ([Attachment 2](#))

Nick Reinecker presented neutral testimony on the bill stating concerns over toxic parts of plants, posing a serious threat to certain animals, and people at various toxic stages of growth in the plant lifespan. Many food plants are safe in the average adult in modest quantities. ([Attachment 3](#))

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES of the Committee on Natural Resources at 8:30am on Tuesday, March 08, 2016 in Room 159-S of the Capitol.

Discussion:

This bill is for proactive management. A contaminated crop is quarantined and held from harvest. The current expense for non-compliance control charged to the landowner is 10% of the property value. That equation would be altered to 50% of the chemical cost as an assessment to the landowner, as opposed to property value. Chad Bontrager is gathering information as to whether all, or a number of Kansas counties have a Noxious Weed Fund.

Chairman Powell closed the hearing on the bill.

Hearing and possible action on: HB2479 — Amendments to the Kansas noxious weed law.

Chairman Powell opened the hearing on the bill. Tamera Lawrence presented an overview of the memorandum proposed amendment. Should this be adopted, technical amendments will be corrected prior to passage. It would be the addition of five new sections to current law. ([Attachment 4](#))

Chad Bontrager presented testimony in support of the bill stating the bill targets improvements to the Kansas Noxious Weed Law, and creates the advisory committee, placing the state noxious weed list in regulation. ([Attachment 5](#))

Leslie Kaufman presented testimony in support of the bill stating the current legislative process can be time consuming and cumbersome. The existing structure might not allow for a quick response in addressing damaging weed issues. ([Attachment 6](#))

Chairman Powell will continue the hearing on Wednesday, March 9, due to time constraints for the committee today.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 am.