

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCKThe meeting was called to order by Rep. Bill Fuller at
Chairperson9:00 a.m. ~~xxx~~ on February 1, 1983 in room 423-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present:

Bruce Hurd, Revisor of Statutes' Office
Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research Department
Kathleen Moss, Secretary to the committee

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Becky Crenshaw, Committee of Kansas Farm Organizations
Ivan Wyatt, Kansas Farmers Union

Chairman Fuller stated today we will continue the hearings and receive testimony from individuals that we have not been able to schedule. Also Dr. James J. Shannon, Assistant Area Supervisor for the Federal Meat Inspection Program, is here to provide answers to questions you might want to ask. The remainder of today is open for committee discussion. The committee will continue discussion and take appropriate committee action tomorrow.

First conferee recognized was Becky Crenshaw, Committee of Kansas Farm Organizations. Her testimony supports the continuation of the State Meat Inspection Program and is Attachment No. 1.

Ivan Wyatt, Kansas Farmers Union was called for testimony. He distributed a prepared statement marked Attachment No. 2, supporting continuation of funding for the State Meat Inspection Program.

Dr. James J. Shannon, Assistant Area Supervisor with the area office in Topeka was called to answer questions. It was explained that he is here merely to answer questions and does not have a position on the issue -- he is neither an opponent nor proponent.

Dr. Shannon said that Kansas has a fine program with a good working relationship and would as soon that Kansas keep their own program. There was discussion on the state program possibly being more efficient than the federal. It was stated that what bothers some members of the committee is that the smaller plants might be forced out of business under the federal system. There were many questions on shut-downs if there is a federal take-over; sanitation; structural requirements; flexibility of hours of federal inspectors and overtime charges; custom plants; personnel and the union.

Dr. Shannon mentioned that Congressman Roberts has drafted a bill to allow interstate shipment of state inspected meat and it has a much better chance of being enacted into law this year than it did last year.

The radio and newspaper article about a complaint in the federal inspection program was mentioned. It was suggested the committee should have some information about it and study the facts and background on what motivated this. Dr. Shannon was asked if he could provide information on what Mr. Copeland was charging. Dr. Shannon said it is public information but did not want to get involved in the newspaper article. The 100 page report was prepared by the Ralph Nader group and Mr. Copeland was a disgruntled, retired employee. However, he felt there are some grounds for the complaints to be filed.

Chairman Fuller instructed the committee to be ready to discuss testimony of the last few days and take action at tomorrow's meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:54 a.m.

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.

GUEST REGISTER

DATE Feb. 1, 1983

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK

| NAME | ORGANIZATION | ADDRESS |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|--|
| H. Shannon | N.S.D.A. | 5968 SW 25 th Topeka, Ks |
| B. Crenshaw | CKFO | Topeka |
| Frank W. Wyatt | Ks Farmers Union | W. Phenon |
| Dan Jacka | Ks State Board of Agriculture | Topeka |
| Max Foster | " " " " " | " |
| Gary D. Woolson | " " " " MPID | " |
| Alan Conway | Div. of the Budget | " |
| Dale Fisher | KLA | " |
| Mike Beam | " | " |
| Dennis Nagel | Div. of Budget | " |

Testimony of the
COMMITTEE OF KANSAS FARM ORGANIZATIONS

with respect to

Kansas Meat & Poultry Inspection

presented by

Becky Crenshaw
Legislative Agent

to

House Committee on Agriculture & Livestock

Rep. Bill Fuller, Chairman

January 27, 1983

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Becky Crenshaw. I'm the legislative agent for the Committee of Kansas Farm Organizations, a coalition of 22 agricultural organizations representing Kansas farmers and ranchers on state legislative issues. Our committee certainly appreciates the opportunity to present our views on the Kansas Meat & Poultry Inspection Department.

As many members of the committee may already realize, the Committee of Kansas Farm Organizations must have unanimous agreement from its member groups before adopting a policy position on legislative issues. Our committee voted unanimously to request continued funding for the state meat inspection program.

The livestock and red meat industry is the largest industry in Kansas. Even though something less than 5% of all animals slaughtered in the state are slaughtered under state inspection, the State Board of Agriculture has already pointed out because these state inspected plants can not ship interstate that approximately 50% of all the meat consumed in Kansas is state inspected. It is imperative that the integrity of the meat inspection program be maintained in order to insure that consumers have the highest confidence about the quality and wholesome of the product they purchase. We have heard several extremely disturbing stories about the difficulty currently being experienced by meat processors in Missouri

Atch. 1

because of USDAs poor job of inspecting processing plants. It would be damaging to the industry in Kansas to have a similar situation occur here.

Most Kansans believe that regulatory authority by governmental agencies operate most effectively for all concerned when it is closest to those being regulated. So far during these discussions I have yet to hear anyone criticize the method in which the state meat inspection program is administered. Everyone seems to agree that the agency is efficient and doing a good job.

I ask the committee to remember that if the state meat inspection program is dropped and the meat processors in Kansas are forced to "go federal" there will be absolutely no regulation or inspection of any custom operations.

Additionally, I believe the owners and operators of meat processing businesses in Kansas should be very concerned by the theory that the federal meat inspection administrator will decide, at his own discretion, which of the regulations they must comply with. Change in administrators or a change in inspectors may bring completely new and different regulations.

When one considers the importance of the livestock and meat packing industries in Kansas we don't believe its asking too much for the State to continue to include in the budget the modest amount of funding this program requires.

Statement

of

Ivan W. Wyatt, President

Kansas Farmers Union

before

The House Committee on Agriculture and Livestock

on

Funding of the States Meat and Poultry Inspection Division

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

I am Ivan Wyatt, President of the Kansas Farmers Union.

I will keep my remarks brief, as I'm sure there will be others who will present you with the facts and figures dealing with this subject, and the resulting effects of the closing down of the State's Meat and Poultry Inspection Division.

At our State Convention held earlier this month in McPherson, the delegates voted overwhelmingly to oppose the elimination of the state's Meat and Poultry Inspection Division.

We realize the effects these dire economic times are having on the state's sources of revenue, and the need and difficulty to balance expenditures with those limited receipts.

The Farmers Union opposition to the elimination of the state's Meat and Poultry Inspection Division is threefold.

One, the loss of service provided by those affected facilities to the rural areas of the state.

Second, the loss of employment of those affected employees, who usually reside in the rural areas of the state and small towns.

Atch. 2

Thirdly, the loss of those locally owned businesses and the effects of the loss of the income generated by these businesses on the remaining businesses in these rural towns.

It should be noted that the State of Kansas spends a considerable amount of money every year to attract new industry and employment opportunities to the state, yet here we are considering whether or not to preserve an already established industry dispersed throughout the state.

This is a prime example of a service provided by government, people take for granted, but is forgotten about when they call for cuts in government spending.

We of the Farmers Union realize cuts are hard to make, because as in this case, it usually means a cut in needs or service no different than when cuts are proposed for education, highways, social needs, etc. Therefore, when it comes to the alternative of not having those services, people should then better understand the need to raise new state revenues.

The Kansas Farmers Union overall policy reflects these fiscal facts of life when we support the continuation of the funding of the Division of Meat and Poultry Inspection.

#