

Approved February 19, 1986  
Date

MINUTES OF THE Senate COMMITTEE ON Agriculture

The meeting was called to order by Senator Allen at  
Chairperson

10:05 a.m./~~p.m.~~ on February 17, 1986 in room 313-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present: Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research Department  
Fred Carman, Revisor's Office

Conferees appearing before the committee: Carol Hedges, Governor's Office  
Ed Reznicek, Kansas Rural Center  
Steven Anderson, American Agricultural Movement  
Jerry Stratham, farmer, Baileyville  
Ivan Wyatt, Kansas Farmers Union  
Dan Cain, farmer, Shawnee and Osage County  
Jere White, farmer, Garnett  
Don Steffes, McPherson  
Wilfred Elliot, farmer, White City  
Jamie Schwartz, Kansas Department of Economic Dept.  
Raymond Fawler, Emporia

Senator Allen called the Committee to order and welcomed the guests present for the hearing on ERO No. 21. The Chairman announced the planned Committee meeting for February 18 had to be cancelled so the agenda would be discussion and possible action on bills previously heard. The Chairman announced that, because of the number of conferees, there would be no questions until all conferees had given their testimony. He then called on Carol Hedges to testify.

Ms. Hedges gave copies of her testimony and other information concerning ERO No. 21 to each Committee member (attachment 1). Ms. Hedges expressed support for ERO No. 21, encouraged passage of ERO No. 21, and stated the future of Kansas agriculture depends on the proposed reorganization.

The Chairman thanked Ms. Hedges and called on Ed Reznicek to testify.

Mr. Reznicek provided copies of his testimony to the Committee members (attachment 2) and expressed support for Governor Carlin's proposal.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Reznicek and called on Steven Anderson to testify.

Mr. Anderson stated he was testifying in behalf of his family and for the American Agricultural Movement. He expressed support for the reorganization of the State Board of Agriculture as proposed by the Governor but he expressed support for making the Secretary of Agriculture an elected position rather than an appointive position to be filled by the Governor. He said the AAM feels the state needs a Secretary of Agriculture with some real clout, one who would make all farmers of the state a top priority and then when farmers begin to make a profit the state will again have a surplus of money. He stated as a member of the AAM and Farm Bureau he feels he has no voice in the selection process for delegates to the annual meeting of the State Board of Agriculture. He stated he had no criticism of the present Board of Agriculture but that farmers need more help than the present system is able to give to farmers. He suggested that if the Legislature chooses to let the people vote and decide the pari-mutuel issue that they should let the people elect the Secretary of Agriculture. Mr. Anderson stated that agriculture needs guidance; he encouraged Democrats and Republicans to work together on reorganization and then to let the people elect the Secretary of Agriculture.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE Senate COMMITTEE ON Agriculture,  
room 313-S, Statehouse, at 10:05 a.m./~~p.m.~~ on February 17, 1986

The Chairman thanked Mr. Anderson and called on Jerry Strathman to testify.

Mr. Strathman gave copies of his testimony to the Committee (attachment 3) and expressed support for ERO No. 21. He stated this plan will not solve the problems of agriculture in our state today but feels this plan is a first step if the problems in agriculture are going to be solved.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Strathman and then called on Ivan Wyatt to testify.

Mr. Wyatt gave copies of his testimony to the Committee (attachment 4). Mr. Wyatt expressed support for reorganization of the State Board of Agriculture. He said he felt the present Board of Agriculture had done a good job under its organization but stated he felt it was time for Kansas to have a State Department of Agriculture.

Senator Allen thanked Mr. Wyatt and called on Dan Cain to testify.

Mr. Cain gave copies of his testimony to the Committee (attachment 5). He expressed support for a Department of Agriculture that would represent all farmers and one that would have a partnership with the Governor's Office.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Cain and called on Jere White to testify.

Mr. White stated he had worked with the State Board of Agriculture for the last ten years. Mr. White said he had been a delegate to the Annual meeting of the State Board of Agriculture. He stated he did not feel the system for choosing delegates was very good. He stated the staff of the State Board of Agriculture does a good job but the problem is they have no authority. Mr. White said he felt they could do a better job if they were a part of the executive branch of our state government. He explained that many changes have occurred over the years and he supported this change be made with the State Board of Agriculture; he encouraged the Committee to approve ERO No. 21.

The Chairman thanked Mr. White and then introduced Don Steffes to testify.

Mr. Steffes gave copies of his testimony to the Committee members (attachment 6). Mr. Steffes encouraged the Committee to approve the changes provided for in ERO No. 21.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Steffes and called on Wilfred Elliot to testify.

Mr. Elliot stated our state needs a Department of Agriculture but not like the State Board of Agriculture that we now have. He stated it was time for a change; he stated stronger leadership would be possible in the plan proposed in ERO No. 21 and he encouraged the Committee to act favorably on this legislation.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Elliot and called on Jamie Schwartz.

Mr. Schwartz stated the marketing functions of the State Board of Agriculture and the State Department of Economic Development need to work together and this would be better accomplished under the plan proposed in ERO No. 21. He encouraged support for ERO No. 21.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Schwartz and called on Raymond Fawler to testify.

Mr. Fawler suggested that most farmers do not know who their delegate to the annual meeting of the State Board of Agriculture is. He also suggested that delegates are in Topeka such a short time that they do not have enough time to really learn the issues. Mr. Fawler suggested the wheel had been bent so many times that it was worn out and that is was time for a change, that it was time to change to a Department of Agriculture. Page 2 of 2

The Chairman thanked Mr. Fawler and all for their testimony and then adjourned the Committee at 11:05 a.m.

GUEST LIST

COMMITTEE: SENATE AGRICULTURE

DATE: February 17, 1986

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	ADDRESS	COMPANY/ORGANIZATION
AITIS FERREE	Yates Center Ks	ST Bd of Ag
Jake Ragan	Lewistown, Ks	ST Bd of Ag
LEON BLOSS	Longton, Ks	St. Bd of Ag
Mary Fund	Box 133 Whiting	Ks. Rural Center
Ed Reznick	Box 133 Whiting	Ks Rural Center
MIKE BEAM	TOPEKA	Ks. LUSTK. ASSN
Rep Don Ryan	Onaga	Leg
RICH MCKEE	TOPEKA	Ks. LUSTK. ASSN.
ROBERT D. PARK	ROSSVILLE #	FARMER
CHARLES E. HAMON	Valley Falls	Bd of Fair Managers
BOB GOTTSCHALK	HUTCHINSON	Ks. STATE FAIR
ELMER DENNING	HUTCHINSON	Ks STATE FAIR
Hank Ernst	Topoka	Kansas Farmer
Joe Lieber	" "	Ks. Co-op Council
Chris Wilson	Hutchinson	Ks Grain & Feed Ass'n
John Kohler	White City, Ks	
Walter G. [unclear]	White City, Ks	Farmer Stockman
Jan Johnson	Topoka	Budget Division
Jim [unclear]	"	Ks Bankers Assn
Don [unclear]	Harrett	
Blaine Bauman	Sabetha	
John Zulsing	Barleynolle	Farmers Union
Bruce Farkin	Barleynolle	
Ormy Stalham	Barleynolle	
Jack Stutz	Junction City	FW

GUEST LIST

COMMITTEE: SENATE AGRICULTURE

DATE: February 17, 1986

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	ADDRESS	COMPANY/ORGANIZATION
Dannel L. Henning	Smith Center Ks.	Farmers Union
Winston Peterson	Monument, Ks.	Farmers Union
LEON D. RIFFEL	ENTERPRISE, Ks	Ks State Board of Ag
Ray Hemman	Hutchinson	Hutchinson News
Bob Wooten	Topeka	Gov Off
Walter Dunn	✓	EKOLA
Raymond Traylor	Emporia	Kans Farmers Union
my van dyke	Tracying Ks	Farm Bureau Farmers Union
Gary Watts	Emporia Ks	Farmers Union
Wayne Traylor	Emporia Ks	Farm Bureau
J Schwartz	KDFD	Topeka
PAT DAVIS	TOPEKA	BUDGET DIVISION
Kelley Horst	Lawrence	legislative Intern
Karen Keen	Mission Hills	Sen Youngworth
Wk Armstrong	Muscatah. Ks.	
John Armstrong	Muscatah K	
Theresa A. Cain	Topeka	Theresa A. Cain
James S. Hoff	McPherson	McPherson Bank Trust
James Lamborn	Lawrence, Ks.	legislator
Bill Fuller	Manhattan	Kansas Farm Bureau
Ivan Wyatt	McPherson	Ks Farmers Union
Tom C. Franke	Stearns City	Ks Farmers Union
Emil P. Mushrush	McPherson	Kansas Farmers Union
Doug Schultz	Manville Ks	Kansas Farmers Union
Roger King	Blue Rapids Ks.	Kansas Farmers Union



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STATE OF KANSAS



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
State Capitol  
Topeka 66612-1590

John Carlin Governor

Testimony to the Senate Agriculture Committee  
Executive Reorganization Order No. 21  
Assistant to the Governor  
Carol Hedges  
February 17, 1986

I appear today representing Governor John Carlin in support of Executive Reorganization Order 21. This ERO accomplishes the following:

- 1) It creates an executive branch Department of Agriculture;
- 2) It makes the Secretary of Agriculture a gubernatorially selected, Senate confirmed position;
- 3) It establishes an office of policy and planning within the Department of Agriculture;
- 4) It expands the representation on the State Fair Board to include members of the travel and tourism industry and the business community; and
- 5) It consolidates the functions of the Grain Inspection Department with the responsibilities of the Department of Agriculture.

The Governor believes this reorganization will lead to more responsive, aggressive and accountable representation for agriculture in state government.

Agriculture continues to be the number one industry in this State. It is unique in as much as it is the only industry that has a branch of government devoted especially to its needs. Special representation for agriculture in government is provided because government has such a vital role in regulating and overseeing agricultural activity and also because the industry provides the most basic needs of society. The Governor believes this unique position is appropriate and is attempting to make the agriculture agency better equipped to deal with the problems of modern day agriculture.

attachment 1  
2/17/86 Sen. Ag.

Agriculture is in the midst of a crisis. A crisis stemming from problems in credit affordability and availability. A crisis affected by the loss of export markets. A crisis caused by depressed commodity prices. The effects of the current problem transcend the farm. This crisis is affecting the well-being of our communities, our banks, our industries dependent on farming, our state economy and the lives of thousands of Kansans.

What measures have been proposed by the Board of Agriculture to address this crisis? What leadership has been provided to legislators to develop solutions? The answer is an unfortunate one--none. This lack of leadership is not an indictment of the individuals involved but an issue of structural inadequacy. ERO 21 proposes changes that would allow the Secretary and the Department of Agriculture to provide more aggressive leadership in agricultural problem solving.

While it is true that the Board responds to proposed legislation by providing fiscal impact and workable information, who prepares this analysis? They have no staff hired for their ability to do such work. Has the Board of elected farmers met to discuss and take a position on this legislation? A much hailed advantage of the current system is that it is farmer controlled, but are they making the needed analysis?

A basic tenet of representative democracy is responsiveness to the voting citizens. Although representatives of select farm organizations vote for members of the Board and they in turn choose the Secretary, the Board is not directly accountable to the citizens of Kansas. Some argue that this is the most desirable system because it is the best protection for farmers. It is further asserted that through the budgetary procedures the Legislature controls the Board's activities. The Governor is not convinced these arguments are true.

First, the farmer representation is questionable. Complicated procedures for qualification as a delegate preclude many legitimate farmers from voting for Board members. Also, the question of how much control the Board has over the full-time employees is legitimately raised. Again, these indictments are not of the particular individuals involved but products of the structure of the system.

There is a further issue of whether it is appropriate for only farmers to be represented in the selection of the Secretary. Although true nationwide, in Kansas particularly, urban and rural non-farmers are directly affected by the performance of agriculture. As our population moves out of farming, this interconnectedness increases. The apparent apathy of our urban representatives with agricultural issues will not continue as the need for state general fund expenditures continue to increase.

Difficult decisions of continuing funding of current activities are now upon us due to Gramm Rudman cuts. New proposed programs to assist with credit and other problems of farmers will begin to compete more directly with programs identified as urban. There must be strong leadership and demonstrated accountability to the people if farm programs are to fare well. Although the Legislature reviews appropriations for the Board of Agriculture, neither it or the Governor has any control over how the programs are run or the money is spent. That statement is not true for any other cabinet level department. As competition for funding increases the assurance of oversight and input becomes more critical. By allowing the Governor to appoint the Secretary and the Senate to confirm that appointment, direct oversight is accomplished.

The proposed change in the structure of the Board of Agriculture would continue to allow for input from farmers but would increase the stake of all Kansans in its operations. It would force agriculture to the top of the political agenda of all future Governors and would eliminate the ability of Governors to blame inaction or inattentiveness on the structure of government. Agriculture deserves such attention and accountability.

The structure of the Board of Agriculture served us well in the past. Just as the techniques used and problems faced by farmers has changed since 1872, so have the demands placed on government in relation to agriculture. Most states are financially ill-equipped to deal with new state responsibilities and future demands, Kansas is structurally ill-equipped. The time is now to trade in an outdated model of government for a modern, more efficient style. The future of Kansas agriculture depends on it.



# State needs system responsive to change

By GOV. JOHN CARLIN  
Special to The Capital-Journal

In 1872, Kansas was celebrating its eleventh year of statehood. Two major railroads had just completed tracks that spanned the state. The Capitol Building in Topeka consisted of one of four planned wings with the dome 31 years from being a reality. The introduction of Turkey Red winter wheat was two years away. And Kansas farmers were still looking for the strongest horses they could find to pull their plows. That same year, the Kansas Legislature created the State Board of Agriculture.

Since a Kansas farmer in 1986 would not consider using a horse-drawn plow, it seems odd the Kan-

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## Pro

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sas Legislature still insists on maintaining the same antiquated state system to address agriculture today. The Board of Agriculture was designed in 1872 to address the problems of that bygone era, not the complex array of issues facing the modern-day farmer.

Agricultural policy was simple in the past. It was primarily motivated by a need to produce more. Today the issues are much more complex. Rural development and redevelopment are becoming agricultural issues. Marketing responsibilities are increasing rapidly. Agricultural policy makers are now routinely confronted with issues of credit availability and affordability. Bank closings and secondary bond markets are the concern of farmers and their lenders.

Obviously, a change is in order. That is why I recommend the 1986 Legislature join with me to reorganize the board of agriculture. My recommendation will expand the functions of the board by creating a cabinet level Department of Agriculture with policymaking responsibility. The secretary of agriculture would be appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate. The department then would be directly accountable to the governor, the Legislature and the people, just as other state agencies are now. Our number one industry deserves no less.

Yet, as important as agriculture is to Kansas, the board of agriculture is limited in its ability to address today's challenges. It handles primarily regulatory duties and does not participate in setting state policy. The board is not responsive to Kansans at large because it is elected by a few, select organizations that in turn appoint the secretary of agriculture. This structure provides for no direct accountability to the people of Kansas, all of whom have a stake in the well-being of the agricultural economy.

Critics of my plan who argue "if it isn't broken, don't fix it," are ignoring the facts. I believe the current board of agriculture is broken. It does not allow for the kind of aggressive leadership that agriculture so desperately needs.

The traditional approach of hoping someone else will solve our problems is gone. And we can no longer depend on the federal government to deal fairly with the American farmer. Historically the most influential force in farm programs, the federal government is now backing away. Federal budget deficits and the emphasis on federalism have led to substantial changes.

For example, the state is now heavily involved in soil conservation, once a federal responsibility. Also, federal support for the extension service is at risk. We must be in a position to react to changing federal policies, but also to initiate new programs at the state level. The outdated system we now have isn't flexible enough to work for our farmers.

No other state has maintained such an outdated system. Under the new structure I recommend, agricultural issues would be elevated on the public agenda by a stronger and more visible Department of Agriculture.

Since its birth as a state, Kansas has depended on agriculture to provide a stable base for its economy. Tragically, that foundation is crumbling. The hardships farmers face today are devastating, not only to our rural communities, but to the state as a whole. The farm crisis is disrupting the lives of many Kansans and damaging the social and economic fabric of the state.

The future of agriculture must be one of the top priorities in Kansas. If we are to survive the current crisis, we must find ways to protect and support our farmers. Elected officials must be responsible for developing the most effective solutions to the challenges facing agriculture. As a farmer, I am proud of my contributions to agriculture. I do not want future governors to put agriculture issues on the back burner. It is a possibility under our current system. That would be unhealthy for our farmers and the state as a whole.

It is impossible to predict everything that's ahead for agriculture. But given what we have seen thus far, we must be prepared for future change. We need a system to meet the changing needs of farmers.

Creating a strong Kansas Department of Agriculture is one step we can and must take if our number one industry is to survive.

Wichita Eagle-Beacon

2-11-86

## Ag Agency Facts on Carlin's Side

**W**HY shouldn't state farm organizations continue to control the state Agriculture Department, and to appoint the state agriculture secretary? Hasn't that system worked well? That's how farm organizations, many farmers and many rural legislators have reacted to Gov. Carlin's executive order to bring the Agriculture Department under control of the governor's office.

But whether the current setup works well — a debatable proposition — is less the issue than public accountability. Most Kansans would be unhappy if the state Transportation Department were under the control of the trucking and construction industries, or if the state Department of Health and Environment were controlled by toxic-waste generators, nursing homes and hospitals. Mr. Carlin argues, simply and eloquently, that the department having oversight of a vital sector of the Kansas economy, farming, should be answerable to an official elected by all the state's voters, the governor.

Opponents of the governor's proposal see the fact the agriculture department now isn't answerable to the governor as an advantage. "We are unique in the nation and the envy of other agriculture departments because of the non-political way it (the department) runs," says Rep. Lloyd Polson, R-Vermillion, chairman of the House Agriculture Committee. But the department is political. It's just run from a narrower political base — delegates elected by farm organizations — than other state departments. That should bother legislators in the same way it bothers the governor, whose motives in proposing the reorganization are above suspicion: He's in his last year in office.

Mr. Carlin's order, issued Monday, will take effect July 1 unless the House or Senate votes within 60 days to reject it. One hopes a majority of legislators understand that in a democracy, public agencies must be accountable to the public. If they do, the order will take effect on time, and with minimal opposition.

*The Hutchinson News 2-13-86*

## Adding clout

If Kansas legislators object to Gov. John Carlin's plan to reshape the state Board of Agriculture and the State Fair Board, they have two months to do something about it.

The best thing they could do in those two months would be to hold hearings to explain what's going on, then enthusiastically approve them.

Gov. Carlin's plan does reflect a radical change in Kansas agricultural leadership.

The change, however, is right.

At present, the Board of Agriculture is picked by the state's major farm groups. The board is also the State Fair Board. It hires the secretary of agriculture (Harland Priddle). It hires the State Fair manager (Bob Gottschalk). The members are conscientious, hard-working and civic-minded.

Gov. Carlin has proposed that future governors select the secretary of agriculture. And in a reversal of today's arrangement, the new Kansas Agriculture Commission would become advisers to the new secretary, in his new cabinet-level job.

The Fair Board would be altered

to include representatives nominated by the Kansas Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Travel Industry Association of Kansas.

The Carlin proposals have two main virtues:

(1) Alteration of the State Fair Board opens the possibility of greater statewide involvement. That could be valuable, in broadening the appeal of this great Hutchinson attraction.

(2) Making the secretary of agriculture a key cabinet member in Kansas assigns direct responsibility for policies and actions both to that secretary and to the governor who appoints him.

- Sure, this injects politics into agriculture. That isn't new. It isn't bad. Kansas needs more, not less, politics these days, because so many Kansans don't understand either agriculture or its problems. The more Kansans understand farm problems and opportunities, the easier it will be for Kansans to solve the problems and capitalize on the opportunities.

Hays Daily News 2-11-86

## Hiring an agriculture secretary

It looks as though Gov. John Carlin's plan to reorganize the state board of agriculture will be killed quickly by the Senate.

On Monday, Carlin formally proposed that the secretary of agriculture be appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate.

Today, opposing senators announced they had more than enough signatures on a resolution to defeat the proposal.

As far as the senators are concerned, Kansas should continue to allow special interest groups to hire state officials.

Currently, the state's secretary of agriculture is selected by the board of agriculture, which is made up of representatives of various farm groups. The group with the most clout on the board is the Kansas Farm Bureau, a powerful force in Topeka and Kansas politics.

The situation is akin to allowing the AFL-CIO and Teamsters select

the U.S. secretary of labor.

In addition to the inappropriateness of allowing special interests to hire state officials is the issue of effective leadership in agricultural issues.

The board of agriculture and its secretary are infamous for not having opinions.

The supposed leaders of the state's leading industry have nary a word to say about anything, with the possible exception of the state fair. Meanwhile, assistance programs for farmers, conservation issues and water policy are ignored.

It is the fear that a governor-appointed secretary would politicize such issues that has caused some to shy away from Carlin's proposal.

But the notion of a secretary of agriculture taking a political stand is not nearly as frightening as a secretary who is working for the narrow interests of private, special interest groups.

## Hold 'er Newt! You're Going the Wrong Way

**E**VEN good leaders can go off in the wrong direction if they don't stop to think things through. That could happen in Kansas this week.

Several state senators are cocked and primed to kill off a needed reform. As it is now, an agency of state government is controlled by special-interest groups. Governor Carlin wants a change.

The Governor asks this question:

Do the people of Kansas want the phone company and the light company to choose members of the K.C.C. — the agency that sets their rates? Of course not. Yet that same sort of thing goes on at the Board of Agriculture.

This board is chosen by members of private farm clubs across the state. Mr. Carlin has ordered a change. But his order can be blocked by the Legislature.

On Monday, 22 state senators said they would take steps to countermand the Governor's order. It would take only 21 votes in the Senate to block the reform.

This is an important dispute. Never before have farmers been in the mess that exists in Kansas now. Strong leadership is needed to revive agriculture. Tough decisions must be made. Some of these decisions may not be popular

with farmers. If farm clubs keep their grip on the Board of Agriculture, the tough decisions won't be made.

The Governor's order would put the board under state control. Future Governors would appoint a Secretary of Agriculture to look after farm affairs in the state.

Here are some of the arguments offered by Governor Carlin:

1. The present board cannot set official state policy.
2. No other state allows private clubs to choose a state officer as Kansas does now.
3. Kansas agriculture must deal with new problems like bank closings, bond markets and international trade.
4. Federal programs such as soil conservation and the extension service may be shifted to the states.
5. The present Secretary of Agriculture, who is generally respected, could head the new agency if the Governor's order is allowed to stand.
6. Many Kansas farmers are not allowed to participate in the present system for choosing the Board of Agriculture.

If they take a closer look, members of the Legislature surely will be able to see the wisdom of the Governor's order. — R.C.

# Governor explains his goal to reorganize agriculture

By Governor John Carlin

The hardships farmers face today are devastating, not only to our rural communities, but to the state as a whole. The farm crisis is disrupting the lives of many Kansans and damaging the social and economic fabric of the state.

As important as agriculture is to Kansas, the current Board of Agriculture has been limited in its ability to address today's challenges. It has dealt primarily with regulatory functions and has not participated in setting state policy. The Board of Agriculture is not responsive to Kansans at large. It is elected by a select group of organizations, that in turn appoint the Secretary of Agriculture. This structure provides for no direct accountability to the people of Kansas, all of whom have a stake in the well-being of the agricultural economy.

Obviously, a change is in order. That is why I recommend the 1986 Legislature join with me to reorganize the Board of Agriculture. My recommendation will expand the functions of the Board by creating a cabinet level Department of Agriculture with policymaking responsibility. The Secretary of Agriculture would be appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Kansas Senate.

Our current structure has been in place since 1872. No other state has maintained such an outdated system. Under the new structure I recommend, agri-

cultural issues would be elevated on the public agenda by a stronger and more visible Department of Agriculture. It would be directly accountable to the Governor, the Legislature and the people, just as other state agencies are now. Our number one industry deserves no less.

This proposed change is not a criticism of the contributions of our current Board of Agriculture. Secretary of Agriculture Harland Priddle has provided sound leadership within current restrictions. He has taken several initiatives to improve the internal operations of the Board. The regulatory functions are now better organized and managed.

However, the current structure is not suited to handle today's new economic challenges. Just as a farmer cannot expect to compete using outdated farm machinery, neither can we as a state compete with antiquated government machinery.

Critics of my plan who argue "if it isn't broken, don't fix it," are ignoring the facts. The responsibilities we face as a state have grown. Rural development and redevelopment are becoming agricultural issues. Marketing responsibilities are increasing rapidly. Agricultural policy makers are now routinely confronted with issues of credit availability and affordability. Bank closings and secondary bond markets are the concern of farmers and their lenders. We must have an agricultural agency at the state level that addresses these important issues.

The answers to the problems we face in agriculture will not be found in the solutions of the past. Tax exemptions and more

effective marketing are not enough to pull agriculture from its quagmire of difficulties. And, unfortunately, we can no longer depend on the federal government to deal fairly with the American farmer. Historically the most influential force in farm programs, the federal government is now backing away. Federal budget deficits and the emphasis on federalism have led to substantial changes.

For example, the state is now heavily involved in soil conservation, once a federal responsibility. Also, federal support for the extension service is at risk. We must be in a position not only to react to changing federal policies, but also to initiate new programs at the state level.

The future of agriculture is one of the top priorities in Kansas. If we are to survive the current economic downturn and successfully compete with other states, we must find ways to protect and support our farmers. Elected officials should address this issue and be in a position to develop the most effective solutions to the challenges facing agriculture. I do not want future governors to put agricultural issues on the back burner. That must not happen if we are to survive as a state.

I do not pretend to advocate that we can solve all the problems of Kansas farmers. But I do believe that there are positive steps that we can take to assist them. We can't predict everything that's ahead for agriculture. But given what we have seen thus far, we must be prepared. Creating a strong Kansas Department of Agriculture is one step we can and must take.



Carlin

*The Hinsley Mercury* 2-13-86

## Kansas Legislature Faces Number of Farm Issues

by  
Kansas Rural Center

The failure of Congress to pass a decent farm bill and the growing disenchantment of farmers and rural people with the deepening farm depression has shifted more attention and emphasis on greater state responses to the problems in farming communities.

As a result of this attention, this session of the Kansas Legislature will see more farm related pieces of legislation than any time in recent memory.

Reorganization of the Board of

Agriculture is the most far-reaching and long-lasting policy reform that will be considered. It would allow the governor to appoint the Secretary of Agriculture and bring the board officially into the government.

The secretary is currently elected by delegates to the Board of Agriculture. The board is unique among the states because it is a private organization controlled by a few agricultural interests, yet it administers agricultural regulations for the public with state money. Some have likened it to a classic case of the fox guarding the henhouse.

Nevertheless, the system has been intact since 1872, with all previous attempts to change it being squashed by the Farm Bureau, the Fair Associations, and Livestock Associations who heavily dominate the board.

Elimination of this conflict of interest is the most compelling argument for reorganizing the board and reducing it from a governing position to an advisory role.

At the same time, there is a great need for an expanded agricultural policy and planning role in state government. The current structure

of the board and its lack of accountability to the public prevents and discourages such a role.

Opposition to the plan has been centered in the organizations which control the board. They believe the independence of the board has served the state well and it will become politicized if the governor is given power to appoint the secretary.

These objections are weak. If the century long decline of agriculture and rural communities in Kansas is any reflection of the role and guidance of the board, then perhaps it has not served the state so well.

The issue is not whether, but how the board will be politicized. The current structure of the board has maintained a very narrow and limited perspective on its responsibilities for state planning and policymaking in agriculture.

This perspective could be broadened without hurting or threatening anyone, except the powers that be.

This issue could be compromised. Let's ask the people of Kansas to elect their Secretary of Agriculture and give the state some real direction on the future of agriculture and rural communities.

## Farm Policy for All

Gov. John Carlin's plan to take control of the Kansas Department of Agriculture from the farm groups is a sound one. Currently no statewide official, responsible to the voters, has any authority over that agency. The department is responsible to the state's farm and livestock organizations, who choose the policy-making Board of Agriculture. The board selects the secretary of agriculture, who runs the agency.

The department's responsibility should be to all Kansans because they pay the taxes which help to operate farm programs and they consume the products produced by farmers.

The farm organizations understandably don't want to lose their power to name the secretary of agriculture. They argue that placing the appointment authority in the hands of the governor, and making the Board of Agriculture an advisory body, only will politicize the agency and bring the potential for political fraud into the myriad of regulatory decisions it makes.

However, the temptation to sway regulatory decisions and agency rulings in the direction of the farmers' interest now must be great. It may even be unconscious, but the end result is a bias toward the point of view of the producer, not the public.

One example is the long-standing complaint of some animal welfare advocates that agency inspectors have not been interested in doing a good job in their inspections of animal shelters and pet shops which supply

the public with pets. And the Department of Agriculture regulates a number of other areas which may seem mundane but which have a direct impact on the consuming public from water rights to pesticide safety to meat and egg quality.

State tax dollars increasingly are being spent to help farmers survive the worst recession since the 1930s. The Kansas FACTS program, for instance, uses state money to provide a hotline linked to financial, legal and counseling assistance for farmers. Proposals before the Legislature would use state money to buy down interest rates on farm loans. It is entirely appropriate that the state should step in to help farmers with these programs, but it is only right that an elected state official oversee use of the tax money that is spent.

Kansas is the only state in which the agriculture secretary or commissioner is not appointed by the governor or elected by the voters. It is indicative of the strong influence of farm groups in the state that this system has not been changed. Former Gov. Robert Bennett tried in 1975, and failed. This time, the Legislature should allow Mr. Carlin's proposed executive order reorganizing the agriculture department to stand — in the interest of all Kansans.



## Editorial Opinion



### The 1986 (Kansas) Farm Bill

The Kansas Legislature opens this week for a long session of farm, finance and frivolity.

While the frivolous matter of gambling could affect finance, it will do little for agriculture, and should not overshadow farm issues.

The body politic might well take a clue from neighboring Missouri, where that state's House speaker last week devoted a third of his opening speech to farm issues and set the tone for making agriculture top priority in the 1986 Missouri legislature.

There are some promising bills and ideas floating around in Topeka, and we would like to see some early action.

First, and to get on with other business, we believe Governor Carlin's executive order for a cabinet level ag secretary should go unchallenged. If any constructive state ag legislation is passed this year, it will likely involve a broader role for the secretary.

That secretary would be more accountable to farmers if appointed by an elected governor and confirmed by a Senate vote than if elected by a committee that was elected by representatives who were elected by . . . some farmers.

Also, the question of a private body controlling public funds may prevent some lawmakers from allocating the funds or responsibility needed to solve state farm problems.

Representative Robin Leach's prefiled House Bill 2636 to establish the Kansas farmland reserve in particular invokes broad power for the ag secretary.

The Leach bill is half of a pair of crucial farm bills for 1986. The other is State Treasurer Joan Finney's proposed Save The Home Quarter/Credit Review Board bill, which some farm legislators say may be introduced by the House Agriculture Committee.

Leach would support land values by holding foreclosed lands off the market for 3½ years or until 70 percent parity, but in its prefiled form, the bill does little to help those being foreclosed on.

Finney's proposal on the other hand, does much to help the debtor, probably at less cost than HB 2636. Yet her plan couldn't undo what's been done: the foreclosures that have resulted in FmHA now owning 66,000 acres in Kansas with the possibility of gaining several thousand more this spring.

Leach's bill could set about righting some of those economic wrongs, if amended.

What must occur to legislators, or must be suggested, is that the two ideas complement each other so well they should be merged into the Kansas '86 Farm Bill.

After the federal government's failure to produce a farm bill that speaks to immediate needs of farmers, it seems logical for states to draft their own versions — in fact, that may be what the Reagan administration had in mind.

With the addition of another "whereby" and a few more "wherefores" the Leach-Finney plans could fit together in such a way that former owners of foreclosed property not yet resold would have an opportunity to repurchase.

That would be a major step toward economic justice for victimized farmers and would set this state up as a leader in

can-do farm legislation

THE WICHITA EAGLE-BEACON

Friday, January 10, 1986

# Editorials/Opinion

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## As We See It:

### Carlin Right on Agriculture Agency

GOV. Carlin's proposal to vest control of the state agriculture department in the governor's office makes eminent good sense, and deserves to take effect without opposition from the Legislature. There's no valid reason why control of state agricultural policy should continue to be vested in various state farm organizations.

Mr. Carlin last month announced he'd issue an executive reorganization order that would remove control of the agriculture department from the 12-member state Board of Agriculture. The board's membership for years has been chosen by elected delegates of the farm organizations, which, significantly, don't represent all Kansas farmers. The secretary of agriculture, who heads the department, oversees the state's various farm programs, and controls water appropriations in the state.

Not surprisingly, Sen. Jim Allen, R-Ottawa, chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, himself a farmer, immediately set the tone for what is likely to be strong legislative opposition to Mr. Carlin's move. "If the wheel isn't broken," Mr. Allen said, "don't fix it." His counterpart in the House, Rep. Lloyd Polson, R-Vermillion, voiced similar sentiments. But neither legislator, nor any of

the farm groups that also have voiced opposition to Mr. Carlin's proposal, have addressed the glaring flaw in the current setup: Those who set policy for the state's largest industry aren't accountable to the voters, in whose name farm policy is carried out.

Some are sure to see in Mr. Carlin's proposal, which would correct that flaw, a desire to inject politics into state farm policy. But "politics" is shorthand for the process by which the needs and desires of the voters are translated into policy — by elected officials. In a democracy, no facet of government — including the agriculture department — should be exempt from that process.

Too, Mr. Carlin has made clear his proposal is neither a move toward personal self-aggrandizement nor a move toward shaking up an agriculture department that, at present, operates effectively. Mr. Carlin, after all, is entering the twilight of his governorship. And he assures that if the order takes effect, and he gets the opportunity to appoint an agriculture secretary, he'd appoint the present secretary, Harland Priddle.

Legislators should take Mr. Carlin's good faith at face value and allow the order, once issued, to take effect. The interests of farming and of the public both would be served.

## Three and a Half Good Ideas

GOVERNOR Carlin, bless his heart, has come out in support of three good ideas — pari-mutuel betting, a state lottery and a Kansas Department of Agriculture.

The Governor has joined others in the state who want to let the people of Kansas vote on lottery and betting proposals.

And if the proposals pass, Mr. Carlin wants to use the state's share of the money to build the Kansas economy.

The Governor said he will work as hard for a lottery and betting as he did for two other constitutional amendments — liquor by the drink and a change in the property-tax system.

Last year, the lottery amendment passed the Senate but did not get out of the House Federal and State Affairs Committee, where it is still alive. The Senate also went along with pari-mutuel wagering, but the proposal fell 10 votes short in the House.

With the Governor pushing this year, perhaps both issues will be approved.

Mr. Carlin says a lottery would bring in \$30-\$35 million a year. Taxes on horse-race betting might produce \$5 million at first and \$10

million after a few years, he added.

The time has come to put the state's obscure Board of Agriculture out of its misery. The agency was set up in 1872 and is controlled by private agriculture groups, even though it functions almost like a state bureau. It has not met the needs of farmers and ranchers of Kansas. Worse, the board is controlled by the people it is supposed to regulate.

Back in 1917, Gov. Arthur Capper tried to change the board, but to no avail. Other Governors have tried through the years. Now it is Mr. Carlin's turn. He wants to replace the board with a Secretary of Agriculture in his cabinet.

So the Governor has come out for three good ideas — a lottery, betting and a Secretary of Agriculture.

If the agriculture plan is approved, Mr. Carlin will need a good person to fill the job of Secretary. He might like to consider John Block, who resigned this week as President Reagan's Secretary of Agriculture. Mr. Block is experienced, personable and knows how to raise hogs. It might be a good idea to bring him to Kansas (well, *half* a good idea). — R.C.

**THE KANSAS RURAL CENTER, INC.**

304 Pratt Street

**WHITING, KANSAS 66552**

Phone: (913) 873-3431

February 17, 1986  
Senate Agriculture Committee  
Hearing on Reorganizing Board of Agriculture

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee

My name is Ed Reznicek. I farm in Nemaha County and I work for the Kansas Rural Center in Whiting, Kansas. Thank you for the opportunity to comment by holding this hearing.

The Kansas Rural Center supports Governor Carlin's proposal to reorganize the Board of Agriculture. Governor Carlin and others have already put forth many good arguments for establishing a Kansas Department of Agriculture. Indeed agriculture is changing and Kansas needs a mechanism to more vigorously address, through policy and planning, the problems and issues facing Kansas farmers, rural communities and consumers.

At the Kansas Rural Center we believe a reorganized Board of Agriculture will benefit family sized farming. Most farmers recognize that food producers and consumers share vital interests in maintaining a family farm system of agriculture. Many farmers express frustration that the public does not understand the problems of family sized farmers and the implications for food prices and quality, should we continue to lose family sized farms.

Reorganizing the Board of Agriculture, making the Secretary of Agriculture either an appointed or elected position, will increase and broaden the discussion of farm issues in Kansas. Gubernatorial candidates will have to put forth a farm platform in election campaigns. This can only promote more thought and discussion of farm and food issues among the broad public. Family farmers will benefit from a broader discussion and understanding of the problems and issues they face.

Reorganizing the Board of Agriculture is also an issue of democracy. The current board represents only those farmers who belong to farm or farm related organizations. All farmers and non-farmers alike are entitled to representation and a voice in the farm and food issues facing Kansas. An elected or appointed Secretary of Agriculture would allow broader representation of the public on farm and food related matters.

Finally, the current structure of the Board of Agriculture represents a conflict of interest. The Board of Agriculture is a private organization administering

*attachment 2  
2/17/86 Sen. Ag.*

public programs and funds that regulate its industry. Such an arrangement is not good public policy and may be unconstitutional.

We are not here to say the Board of Agriculture has not done its job. But agriculture is changing and the state's role regarding agriculture should also change. Now is the time to make those changes.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I will try to answer any questions.

McPherson Sentinel 1-6-86

## Support ag agency

A couple of weeks ago Gov. John Carlin was stumping pretty vigorously for a fundamental change in Kansas politics. The change is probably a pretty good one.

What Carlin wants to do is eliminate the state Board of Agriculture and in its place create a state secretary of agriculture, a cabinet-like position.

The greatest difference would be in the way the state board is chosen and the way the secretary would be chosen.

Since it was created nearly 114 years ago the 12 members of the State Board of Agriculture have been chosen by delegates selected by members of the various farm organizations.

A secretary of agriculture on the other hand would be appointed by the governor with the consent of the Senate.

With the State Board of Agriculture changed to just an advisory board, of course, its duties would be assumed by the governor's office through the secretary. They include appropriations of water in the state,

regulating weights and measures, dairy and meat inspections, chemical uses, noxious weeds and service on the fair board.

Those are all very, very important in Kansas, particularly water appropriations. And the problems as Carlin outlines them are that the board isn't answerable politically to the people of the state and there isn't the contact between the board and the governor's office that there should be, particularly now when that close liaison is so sorely needed.

One reason the governor didn't mention, probably for political reasons, is that because of the diverse stands always being taken by the various farm organizations, it is difficult for the board to reach a consensus on difficult but important agricultural matters.

The governor will probably make the change by executive order in January. If so, the Legislature would need to endorse it for it to become effective. In our opinion, both should do so.

# Kansas Legislative News 1-3-86

## **CARLIN WOULD RESTRUCTURE STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

GOVERNOR TO TRANSMIT EXECUTIVE REORGANIZATION ORDER. As speculated, Governor John Carlin has announced that he will transmit to the 1986 Legislature an executive reorganization order creating a cabinet level department of agriculture headed by a secretary of agriculture. The present Board of Agriculture would be reduced to an advisory board. In addition, the Governor proposes to provide the agency with an expanded policy and planning capability. Under the state constitution the Governor must transfer the order within the first 30 days of the session. The House and the Senate then have 60 days to act. If either house rejects the order by a majority vote, it dies. If neither house rejects the order, it becomes law.

COMMENT. In effect, the Governor is proposing that the agriculture function of state government be treated as other major functions such as transportation, corrections, health and environment, etc. and take its place as a coequal in the Governor's cabinet. Most political theorists hold that such direct appointment, subject to confirmation by the Senate, makes an agency more responsive to the people of a state as a whole. That would certainly be the case here where the present Board of Agriculture is dominated by the Kansas Farm Bureau. The Farm Bureau you may recall is that farm organization with such sensitivity to the economic plight of those it purports to represent that it announced recently that it is going to build a brand new office building because it is doing so well. The Governor would not only end this archaic system, he would also improve the restructured agency's ability to initiate policy leadership.

# *Junction City Daily Union*

12-30-85

## *Time to update*

"One of the requests Gov. John Carlin is making of the 1986 Legislature is to bring the control of Kansas agriculture within the state system.

"Carlin wants the secretary of agriculture to become a cabinet position, appointed by the governor with confirmation of the Kansas Senate.

"At present... various farm organizations now select delegates who choose the agricultural board. The board in turn selects the secretary of agriculture.

"With the farm crunch becoming greater in Kansas with no outlook for improvement, the department does need to be under the executive wing.

"Also with the proposed abandonment of federal programs, Kansas, like every other state, will have to become more involved with the control of agriculture within its boundaries.

"What worked in 1872, when the present agricultural advisory board was established, will no longer work a century later when there are many different problems to address.

"Among the national programs threatened with the move to balance the budget is the extension service. The program is important to Kansas and, if abandoned by Washington, (will need to be picked up by the state.)

"It would be impractical to do this with the agricultural structure we have now. Farming is very important to Kansas and we should treat it first class.

"The 1986 legislators, if they want to bring Kansas farm policy within the realm of the 1980s, have little choice but to give the governor his wish."



## A wise, but doomed, ag plan

Gov. John Carlin's proposal to reform the Kansas Board of Agriculture is doomed to die quickly in the Legislature. Meantime, let the governor's struggle shed some light in a musty corridor where private interests are protected at public expense.

The governor dares drag the board, a 19th century Kansas creation with pre-Civil War roots, into modern public accountability. Carlin's premise is that the agriculture board is controlled by private farm lobbies. By executive order, he would bring the department under his executive branch and appoint a cabinet-level secretary of agriculture accountable to the governor.

The Farm Bureau and the Kansas Livestock Association, the two lobbies that control the board of agriculture by electing its members, say that "grassroots" involvement in agriculture matters must be preserved; the agency must be free of partisan political influence such as the meddling of a governor.

The agriculture board and its six divisions are the only tax-supported state agencies controlled solely by private interests. Put another way, the farm lobbies — chiefly the Farm Bureau and KLA — run a public agency with a budget of \$30 million.

This is akin to a system that would allow the Teamsters Union to pick a corporation commission to regulate the trucking industry.

Grassroots has nothing to do with control of the Kansas Board of Agriculture.

The board was established in 1872 to perform duties of the Kansas State Agricultural Society, which had been established in 1857. The 1872 law divided the state into eight districts with members elected by farm organizations from each district. There has been a change since, in 1961, when the number of districts was reduced to six, with two board members elected from each.

Only Farm Bureaus, Granges and Farmers Unions which have county memberships of 100 or more may send delegates to the annual state agriculture convention, which rubber-stamps election of board members. The board then picks its own secretary, now accountable only to the board, which is accountable only to the farm lobbies.



**John  
Marshall**  
HARRIS NEWS SERVICE

Carlin's reform proposals aren't new. Ten years ago a special committee on governmental reorganization tried much the same, creation of a cabinet-level department run by a secretary appointed by the governor; it was to have been the state's central agency for administration of farm policy and laws regulating agriculture and agribusiness.

The Farm Bureau and KLA went into action, pressuring lawmakers to shelve the proposal before it was taken seriously.

Then, as now, the proposal drew support from lawmakers and consumer groups who ask that the public be let in on policy and regulation of the state's biggest business. All the general citizenry has as much at stake in farm policy as have the farmers. For example, the board has control of dozens of standards and regulations such as milk quality, weights and measures, meat grades, grain inspection; it has control of a sweeping study of our water resources all across Kansas.

Then, as now, the proposal is to effect an efficient, cabinet-level agency able to respond quickly to change — a secretary whose position would be that of chief spokesman for farm policy and the farm industry.

The board would become an advisory body, even in recognition of the lobby influence of farm organizations that elect it, but with some check by the public at large through the governor.

At present, and for more than a century, the board has escaped such reform. House Speaker Mike Hayden says an informal survey of his GOP colleagues already shows they will squash Carlin's reform proposal.

So the old way will stay the same way. The Board of Agriculture remains responsible not to the public who finance it or look to it for general leadership, but to the farmer-delegates who select it — and whose industry it is supposed to regulate.

Salina Journal 12-29-85

## A wise agriculture plan

Imagine a state where the largest industry is overseen by a board whose members are hand-picked by special-interest groups from among those regulated.

That's exactly what Kansas has in its state Board of Agriculture.

That's why Gov. John Carlin's proposal to revamp state oversight of agriculture is wise.

Carlin wants to bring the agriculture department into the executive branch of government and make the state agriculture secretary a cabinet-level position appointed by the governor, as U.S. Secretary of Agriculture John Block was selected by President Reagan.

The agriculture board would assume an advisory role.

Currently, representatives of farm organizations elect members of the state Board of Agriculture, who then appoint a state agriculture secretary. The setup yields the only state agency that operates on state funds, but isn't

controlled by state government.

Kansas' system of overseeing agriculture is so outdated that all other states have abandoned similar board setups, Carlin says.

A cabinet-level secretary of agriculture would be accountable to all Kansans, whose votes hire the governor. That makes sense because the state agriculture board's decisions, on such matters as water appropriation, affect *all* Kansans — not just those farmers who choose to belong to particular special-interest organizations.

The proposal from Carlin, a Democrat, is similar to an executive order former Gov. Robert F. Bennett, a Republican, unsuccessfully issued during his term.

The idea is sound, and reorganization would be wise. The GOP-dominated Legislature should go along with Carlin instead of spending another session opposing wise recommendations simply because they came from a Democrat.

## Secy. of Agriculture

Despite being about to enter the last year of his term of office, Gov. John Carlin continues to stir controversy.

Opponents of his latest proposal, which would create a new cabinet department, are likely to create a scene normally reserved for catastrophe.

Carlin wants to make the state's secretary of agriculture accountable to the governor, with a Department of Agriculture.

The current system of choosing an agriculture secretary is rather strange, but has been protected for many years. Representatives of various farm organizations choose the 12 members of the State Board of Agriculture, which in turn select the secretary.

The board sets many policies, most of which are strictly related to agriculture. However, it also controls some things that affect everyone, such as water appropriations.

Carlin would leave the

board in place as an advisory group, but it would not have any power over policy. The proposal is not a new one. As Carlin noted last week during a press conference, governors since the 1920s have tried to accomplish his goal.

Carlin will issue an executive order to create his new agency, and legislators will have 60 days after it is issued to accept or reject it. There is no chance rural legislators will allow the change to go into effect without a challenge.

As the farm economy worsens, it makes more sense to place policy decisions in the hands of an elected governor.

The refrain heard during many gubernatorial campaigns has been that the governor can do nothing about agriculture. It is time to give the governor, not just Carlin, the authority and the responsibility for helping agriculture.

Carlin will gain new scars in the battle over the secretary of agriculture, but the state will be better off if he wins.

*Hays Daily News* 12-30-55

### *Not representative*

"... (Harland) Priddle was named secretary of agriculture by the Kansas Board of Agriculture, which is made up of representatives of various farm groups.

"Governor Carlin thinks it's a lousy way to pick an agriculture secretary.

"We agree. Every other state administrator of comparable rank is named by the governor or elected by the citizenry at large.

"There is no compelling reason why agriculture should be different. There are many reasons why it should not...

"Despite the obvious disadvantages of the current system, the chairmen of the Kansas House and Senate agriculture committees indicate they will oppose any change.

"... The Legislature's lack of enthusiasm is understandable. The Kansas Farm Bureau, which has the loudest voice in the selection process and, therefore, has the most to lose, is a power which many in the Capitol would rather support than oppose.

"As things stand now, the secretary of agriculture is not much more than a handmaiden to farm organizations and, in particular, the Farm Bureau. Whether those organizations are even representative of Kansas farmers is questionable."

Ottawa Herald

12-30-85

## Is Kansas the only state in step?

Ottawa Herald

Gov. John Carlin, who can't run for re-election, won't win any popularity contests if he persists in his efforts to change the agricultural leadership situation in Kansas.

Presently, the secretary of agriculture is picked by various farm organizations in the state and serves at their pleasure. The governor has no hold on the office.

Carlin thinks this is a lousy way to pick an important official. He points out that Kansas is the only state in 50 that does it this way.

He is, however, quick to point out that the present secretary of agriculture, Harland Priddle, has been most efficient and cooperative

and any change in the way the secretary is selected isn't a slight at Priddle.

Carlin claims he is looking to the future. The next governor might not be so fortunate as to have a man as capable as Priddle if the selection is left up to farm groups instead of the elected governor.

Of course, the argument will be made that the secretary should serve the farmer, not partisan politicians.

So Carlin has tossed another interesting problem into the laps of legislators who return to Topeka next month. We hope they give Carlin's proposal serious consideration.

The first question should be: Is every state out of step but Kansas?

12/30/85

Pittsburg Sun

11-25-85

JOHN MARSHALL —

# Agriculture debate should be aired

A new proposal is in the works to junk our present State Board of Agriculture and replace it with a Department of Agriculture, a high-level bureau fit for the state's biggest business.

Gov. John Carlin has drafted a plan to scrap the present board by executive order and replace it with a board and Secretary of Agriculture appointed by the governor. The Legislature would have power to reject the plan.

This would keep the juices flowing in what otherwise promises to be a dry session of the 1986 Kansas Legislature. That is, until the Farm Bureau decides that enough nonsense is enough and proceeds to swat the notion before people start taking true reform too seriously.

Despite its eminent demise, the governor's plan is sound in theory. Agriculture is, and has been, too vital to Kansans and to the world to continue shrugging it off as the present system does.

**THE STATE BOARD** of Agriculture doesn't do much so far as farm development is con-

cerned. It has a variety of inspection jobs, on mostly food quality. Such operations as the Kansas Wheat Commission and the State Fair are on its organizational chart but they generally go their own ways without much guidance.

The present board is a closed corporation, run by the Farm Bureau through a hoary process in selecting board members. Only Farm Bureaus, Granges and Farmers Unions which have county memberships of more than 100 may send delegates to the state agriculture convention, which elects the state board, which elects the Secretary of Agriculture. With these membership requirements, the powerful Farm Bureau lobby controls the convention, the election, the board, the secretary.

**THE CURRENT BOARD** is controlled and operated by the industry it's supposed to regulate on behalf of all the people. The board rules in policy and regulations that affect every Kansan — milk quality and grain inspection, meat standards and weights and measures, for examples. Yet consumers, housewives,

labor, commerce groups and the non-farming public in general are left out.

The governor's plan, if it makes it to a public forum, could be a step toward a vital Department of Agriculture, a strong office of secretary, a Kansas voice in the global considerations of farm policies. It would get more Kansans concerned about our basic industry. It would reduce gaps between farmers and non-farmers.

If, for example, an embargo is placed on grains, a forceful state Department of Agriculture could rush to the attack, and its voice would have more impact than that of private farm lobbies.

**SUCH REFORMS** have been tried before. Desirable as such an updating of our ancient system is, it stands little chance in the Legislature, once the Farm Bureau lobbyists get at it.

This doesn't mean the debate should not be aired. We still might learn something.

*Marshall is editor of Harris News Service.*

## The Ag Board

The Kansas Board of Agriculture is visibly not representative of the Kansas farm community and of Kansas.

It's all male.

Whether or not the board is also philosophically or economically representative can now also be formally explored.

In a roundabout way, Gov. John Carlin has proposed a change. He's right to have done it. This is a fine time to review some basic questions:

Should the Board of Agriculture be accountable directly to special groups in the industry (no matter how good they are), or to the public (no matter how indifferent it may be)?

Should the Board of Agriculture be "politicized," meaning subject to the desires of the governor? The answer to that question is yes, though "politicizing" the board would most certainly not guarantee better results.

The Kansas Board of Education is

electd directly by the people. However, it's an ineffective nothing in Kansas education. The state Board of Regents is picked by the governor as the most highly politicized committee in the state. Yet it frequently rises above its political roots to perform admirably. (Its current, and flawed, surrender by osmosis to Washburn U. is an example of the dangers of politicization.)

The manner in which the Board of Agriculture would be selected is not nearly so important as the public interest generated, after selection.

- More political concern about Kansas agriculture is essential. The present Board of Agriculture and its effective secretary should welcome discussions of new ways to generate that increased interest in agriculture by all occupational groups. It should be painfully clear these days that farmers need politics far more than politics needs farmers.

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N. E. KANSAS FARM Advocate MEMBERS

Supporting this Position

Jake Geigen	Robinson, Ks
George Royer	Herington, Ks
Alvin Bauman	Sabetha, Ks
Joe Strathman	Axtell, Ks
Ken Wallingford	Effingham, Ks
Iru Boldridge	Effingham, Ks
Dave Becker	Onida, Ks
Keith Holthaus	Seneca, Ks
Bruce Larkin	Baileyville, Ks
Father Dennis Wait	Axtell, Ks
Gene P. Holthaus	Centralia, Ks
Tom Rezac	Onaga, Ks
Jerry Strathman	Baileyville, Ks
Keith Young	Effingham, Ks
Dave Strathman	Axtell, Ks
Emmet Koch	Centralia, Ks
Gene Holthaus	Seneca, Ks

attachment 3  
2/17/86 Sen. Ag.



①

Thank You Mr Chairman + members of the committee,  
for allowing me this opportunity to testify.

On Feb 6th, this year, a group ~~of~~ composed of mostly farmers, from the N.E KANSAS Farm Advocate Network, met to discuss proposed legislation currently being advanced ~~into the legislative process~~. Included in this discussion was the proposed re-organization of the State Board of Agriculture, as outlined in the executive Reorganization Order presented by Governor Carlson. Although our concerns with the present structure of the KANSAS Board of Ag were many, the following points were considered to be the most critical.

### Point # I

Our group ~~felt~~ <sup>feels</sup> very strongly that the current Board of Ag does not adequately address the importance and needs of our state's # I industry, agriculture. It was felt that if a survey <sup>were</sup> ~~was~~ taken, considerably fewer than 50% of KANSAS farmers would know the name of our present Ag Secretary, and far fewer still would be able

②

† list the duties or accomplishments of our present Board of Ag. We felt this to be a rather sad commentary on the importance and visibility of the Board, in the minds and in the eyes of the Kansas farmers it is intended to serve. The point was made that, indeed, the name of Texas Commissioner, Hightower, carried more weight and significance than our own Kansas Secretary. It is important to point out that this is not a criticism of Mr. Priddle, but rather the result of the constraints and limited scope, of our present system. This for these reasons we strongly support the Executive Reorganization Order, which would provide for an expanded policy and planning function in the Dept of Ag, to assist in proposing, analyzing, and implementing favorable farm legislation on both the state and national levels.

Point # 2

Opponents of the E.R.O. contend, that to make the Secretary of Ag an appointive position of the governor, would politicize the position. Our

(3)

RESPONSE to that contention is this: IN NO WAY would the process be ANY MORE political than it already is. The present selection process is controlled by the politics of private farm organizations. IN fact it was of NO small concern <sup>to our group</sup> that many of the States' FARMERS who do not belong to ANY farm organization, ~~the~~ ARE NOT REPRESENTED in ANY way <sup>in</sup> by the present selection process.

Point #3

It seems to our group that the Federal Govt, is bent on backing AWAY from its traditional leadership role in farm policy AND legislation. As this trend CONTINUES it is very likely states will play AN even larger role in shouldering functions previously handled by the Feds. We do not believe our present State Board board structure is set up to adequately handle this added responsibility. Examples - Soil Conservation & County Extension programs.

(4)

Point # 4

The fourth and final point we would like to address is the question of accountability. The Board of Ag. as it now exists is controlled by and accountable to the private farm organizations. This structure provides for no direct accountability to the people of Kansas, all who have a stake in the well-being of the ag. economy. This situation exists in no other facet of state government.

E.R.O. 21 would change this, and make the Board of Ag. directly accountable to <sup>all the</sup> ~~the~~ citizens of Kansas.

~~I ~~mentioned~~~~, in an article in Sunday's Capital Journal

Mr. Priddle, has argued that the present system assures continuity. We as concerned farmers feel we cannot afford the continuation of present Board of Ag. direction, but instead must chart a new and more dynamic course if the future of our states finest industry is to be assured. We realize that this measure will in no way solve our farm crises, Thank You.

but we feel it is A NECESSARY first step  
if the problems of Agriculture ARE to be solved in  
the future.



Statement of

IVAN W. WYATT, PRESIDENT OF THE KANSAS FARMERS UNION

before the

THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Monday, February 17, 1986

on

EXECUTIVE REORGANIZATION ORDER NO. 21  
(Establishing a Department of Agriculture)

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

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

We rise in support of Executive Reorganization Order No. 21.

First, we need to set the record straight. Those of us who support the reorganization order to establish a State Department of Agriculture are doing so because we recognize we can no longer solve the problems of today's agriculture and rural communities with a regulatory agency that was organized in the time when our state was barely 10 years old. This was an era when agriculture was a industry of the local blacksmith, the local harness maker, home grown seed and the markets were the local miller and feed store.

Nearly fifty years later in 1917, when Arthur Capper was the Governor of Kansas, the progressive farmer was beginning to experiment with the steel wheel tractor. When you spoke of politics, you were talking about the county commissioner race.

Today's agriculture is an international industry, with foreign made machinery, international seed companies, multi-national grain companies, international politics and dual, rubber-tired four wheel driven tractors.

The Board of Agriculture has done a good job for what it was designed to do in its day.

You wouldn't expect a farmer to survive or succeed today farming with a steel-wheeled F-20 tractor. Neither can we expect or should we expect the State Board of Agriculture, a regulatory agency of the 1870's to successfully deal with the multitudes of problems facing Kansas agriculture today.

Today we are witnessing the squandering of talent. The Secretary of the Board of Agriculture has done a commendable job in that position as the administrator of a board that meets only four times a year, but just as the best intentioned farmer on a F-20 tractor, Harland Priddle is limited to what he can accomplish with an outmoded regulatory agency.

Now is the time for the state legislature to recognize the reality of the real world of today's agriculture for what it is. We can no longer say if it worked well 114 years ago, so why change it today!

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No, maybe the wheel isn't broken, but it is time to put on rubber tires, add four-wheel drive for the roads of the 21st century.

It is a sad state of affairs that when a farmer is old enough to retire, he gets more recognition and consideration in the form of a state department of aging that when he was a struggling farmer striving to survive and make a living for his family.

Kansas has numerous departments within state government, but we find many who would deny such stature for the state's premier industry, agriculture.

I find it impossible to fathom any potential gubernatorial candidate who says he wants to help agriculture and then stands up and says he is against giving recognition to the importance of agriculture to the state of Kansas. There is a need for a Department of Agriculture to deal with the problems of agriculture forcing, not only the farmer, but every rural businessman in towns such as Iola, Hutchinson, Pratt, Phillipsburg, Ottawa, Seneca and the list goes on and on. These are people who are all a part of the rural community.

Experts at Kansas State University have predicted Kansas may suffer a 20% population displacement within the next five years. And then we have people saying "no" we shouldn't make any change. Kansas agriculture does not deserve a Board of Agriculture that is satisfied with recommending in these troubled times to the legislative agriculture committees of defining the term "weed".

In the past, little consideration was given at the state level of the needs of the farmer and the local businessman for them to survive. Today, it is becoming very evident we don't have just a farm problem--we have a rural community problem that is affecting the state as a whole. Yet the Board of Agriculture allows only some farmers, not all farmers, to participate. Not all citizens of the rural community, only those who pay a "poll tax" in the form of membership dues to a private organization. Yet many of those who support this concept are adamant in their opposition to a "closed shop" that compels a laborer to pay dues to an organization to receive the benefits of a union. It is public record that the majority of Kansans favor an "open shop". Such inconsistency--to compel farmers to pay dues to participate in the agriculture affairs of the state--should not be tolerated.

We in agriculture and the rural communities can bury our heads in the sand only so long.

Opponents to the reorganization plan say they oppose a State Department of Agriculture because they don't want the urban people, or even the local businessman, involved in the affairs of agriculture. This thinking may hold sway for a while yet, but stop to think a minute. If we do nothing; and we suffer the 20% depopulation of the rural community, where will the voting strength shift to in the next reapportionment--only a few years away. Think about it. Who then is going to determine what is good for agriculture if we don't establish a Department of Agriculture now, while we have the votes to do it right.

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The state of Massachusetts was one of the first states to establish a Department of Agriculture. Today that Department of Agriculture is working to preserve farmland and help farmers market their produce direct to the consumer, and so on.

What is the Kansas Board of Agriculture doing? Trying to define what a weed is!

Today we often hear of the need for alternative crops in Kansas, but by state law, those people working in these areas are denied access to be represented as a part of the state's agriculture because of their small numbers and their courage to break new ground.

A recent statewide poll shows only 22% of the state opposed the establishment of a state Department of Agriculture. I think a "secret" expression of opinion in this capitol building would indicate a similar opinion.

The time has come when we can no longer protect special interest groups within agriculture at the expense of our rural communities and the farm families struggling to survive today.

Kansas deserves, the Kansas farmer deserves, the rural town deserves, the people of Kansas deserves a state Department of Agriculture. We can no longer hold back the dawn of the 21st century.

Thank you.



TESTIMONY ON EXECUTIVE REORGANIZATION ORDER NO. 21

before the

SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

February 17, 1986

by Dan O. Cain, Topeka, Kansas

Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Agriculture Committee. My name is Dan Cain and I am a producer in Shawnee, Douglas and Osage Counties in Kansas.

It is often said and it is generally felt nationwide that "old ways die hard in Kansas." What can we do to begin to dispel and disperse this negative image? What steps can we take to progress and expand?

We have before us Executive Reorganization Order No. 21 that would reorganize the Kansas Board of Agriculture to be responsive and effectively deal with today's agricultural problems which can not be solved by a deficit ridden Federal government in Washington, D.C.

The ERO would form a partnership and a close working relationship between the executive and legislative branches of government. The present system lacks accountability because it lacks executive branch participation and lacks legislative confirmation by the Kansas Senate.

Let us examine the confirmation process as provided by this reorganization. The present system is totally devoid of Senate confirmation and allows the special interest farm lobbies to run a state agency with the Kansas taxpayers paying the bill.

Does the present system allow for an equitable working partnership to help solve our agricultural problems statewide?

The answer is simply that it can't and never has in its 114 year existence as evidenced by the decline in Kansas agriculture we are witnessing today.

There are those that say "if the wheel is not broken, don't fix it". May I say to you that the wheel is broke and this is an irresponsible statement to cover a system that is not functioning in today's environment.

Reorganization is needed to bring about the partnership necessary to deal with today's agricultural problems.

Thank you.

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My name is Don Steffes. I'm President and Chief Executive Officer of the McPherson Bank and Trust Co. I'm a native Kansan, who grew up in Olpe in Lyon County and attended Kansas State Teachers College at Emporia. The early part of my working career was devoted to community development work throughout Kansas. I have continued to be very active in community work, primarily involved in Industrial Development as a volunteer. I served as the first managing officer of the Kansas Development Credit Corporation and have been very active in numerous community and state organizations all of my 30 year working career.

For the past 18 years I have been associated with McPherson Bank and Trust Company. Our total assets are about 115 million dollars. We are one of the larger agricultural lending banks in Kansas. Our Farm Management department manages almost 30,000 acres of farm land, primarily in Kansas, which makes us about the 70th largest in the nation. In addition to agriculture, the bank has been very involved in assisting the growth of manufacturing companies and we believe that we have substantially helped keep our industrial economy strong and growing. Needless to say, we are deeply committed to both agriculture and industry. We know they are both very important to us.

I am a totally and completely dedicated Kansan and am appearing today in that spirit and asking that you carefully review and then approve the reorganization of the Board of Agriculture. It is my firm belief that the Kansas economy is in serious trouble and I believe that it is essential for all Kansans of goodwill to work together to get through these very perilous and troubled times. It is my belief that we must

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constantly review our existing structures and laws and be prepared to accept changes if they are in the best interest of most of the people. I fully realize that it is always difficult to change and I vividly recall a college professors comment that "it is always possible to defend the status quo no matter how bad the situation might be." The economic vitality of Kansas is at stake and I, along with most of you, am very concerned with the exodus of our children and grandchildren from the State, particularly our most highly skilled and gifted. It is very probable that this economic decline will be most visible after the 1990 Census when you, the Legislature, will probably be called upon to redistrict our State to bring us down to four Congressional Districts. That will be the most graphic evidence of how we are meeting the competition from our 49 sister states.

Our bank is deeply committed to our McPherson County farm economy, and we are making every effort to help our farm customers. However, I am personally convinced that one of the best ways to help agriculture and farmers and, therefore, McPherson is to continue to find, develop and create additional manufacturing jobs for those farmers who must find other employment. We believe that McPherson has had a high success rate in this regard in the past, but I can assure you this is no easy task and we are very concerned about the future.

Of critical importance in this activity is the availability of water. This may not be a problem to some of you in this room, but I will venture to say that the availability of water at a reasonable cost will be one of the determining factors in the growth and vitality of all

areas of Kansas. It is important to us now and it will be absolutely critical in the future. Even now, McPherson is considering an attempt to buy irrigation wells to provide municipal water. I know this is critical in Central Kansas and I know that other parts of the State are just as affected. And it is certainly not because McPherson has not planned in the past. Those of you who have been involved in state matters for some time will already know that McPherson has constantly provided a great deal of leadership in regard to water legislation and supply. I would hasten to add that McPherson officials have been very pleased with the past leadership of the Division of Water Resources and certainly are complimentary of the present management. But we are concerned about the future when the water supply will become even more critical and allocation of this scarce resource must be made.

We know that water in Kansas will be a continual source of concern as cities grow and develop. Of course, the problem can be solved by shrinking our population and our industries. Speaking for McPherson we do not want this to happen and I would guess that most of you in this room are of the same opinion about your town or area.

Since this is so important, I think that the Division of Water Resources should be responsible to all the people of Kansas and should not be controlled by one segment of our population. Under present law, the Division of Water Resources reports to the Board of Agriculture and neither cities, industries nor recreational interests have a voice in that selection process. Those of you who read history will certainly recall that the lack of water has caused much bloodshed and hardship.

It seems to me that we now have the equivalent of "taxation without representation" and as you know, wars have been fought over that, too. We believe there should be a change in the make-up of the control of this essential natural resource to fully represent all of the interests of Kansas, not just agriculture. There are many other reasons why the Board of Agriculture should be reorganized, but in the interest of time, I will leave those arguments to others. But in regard to both water and agriculture, we need to match responsibility with authority. The power to regulate should be vested ultimately in all the people and not just a select group.

A comparison of this situation might be helpful. The present operation of the Board of Agriculture would be similar to the Kansas Bankers Association selecting the Banking Board who would hire the Bank Commissioner, who would be in charge of the regulation of all financial institutions in Kansas. You can well imagine the feelings of other banking groups, such as the Savings and Loan League or the Kansas Independent Bankers Association. They would be justly outraged at this lack of representation. However, as a member of K.B.A., I would probably argue eloquently in favor of leaving the situation alone by saying "If its not broke, don't fix it." I think most of you would agree that such a situation would not be in the best interest of all the people of Kansas.

Furthermore, I believe that this is not a partisan issue and it should not be discussed on the merits of whether it is being advocated by a Democratic or a Republican governor, but it should be debated on the

merits of what is best for Kansas. Certainly, I have worked hard for Republican causes and candidates all my life, and my parents before me, but feel absolutely no reluctance to support this issue that has been championed so well by Governor Carlin in this his last year in office. Let us not lose this opportunity to help all of agriculture, plus our cities and our industries by focusing on perceived short term political considerations.

In closing, we Kansans cannot live forever in the past. We must change with the times or we will become like the dinosaurs that roamed our state millions of years ago and became extinct because they could not or would not adapt to a new environment. Thank you for this opportunity to express my views.

TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE AT 10:00 A.M. on  
FEBRUARY 17, 1986 IN ROOM 313S BY DON STEFFES, McPHERSON, KANSAS