

MINUTES OF THE SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Derek Schmidt at 8:35 a.m. on February 19, 2003 in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senator Downey, excused

Committee staff present: Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research
Lisa Montgomery, Revisor of Statutes
Judy Swanson, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Janet McPherson, Kansas Farm Bureau
Doug Wareham, Kansas Grain & Feed Dealers

Others attending: See attached guest list

Senator Corbin gave a brief history on why **SB 145**, abolishing state board of agriculture, was introduced. The selection process for the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture this year has been cumbersome, and this bill would save the State time, money and will not hurt the Department of Agriculture. The current process for selecting a Secretary was discussed. It took over \$4,000 to advertise for the position, then no one was chosen from the applicants. The process then had to be repeated. The advisory board meets approximately four times a year. The Governor should have the ability to choose who they want for the Secretary position.

Janet McPherson, Kansas Farm Bureau, testified they support the State Advisory Board as it is currently, and oppose **SB 145**. (Attachment 1)

Doug Wareham, Kansas Grain & Feed Dealers and Kansas Agri-Business Retailers Association, said he hoped this process would not be needed again in the near future, therefore would recommend no action be taken on the issue at this time, but looked at again later. It would be good to have a Secretary of Agriculture appointed by the Governor at the same time other department secretaries are chosen.

Greg Foley, Acting Secretary of Agriculture, said that the cost benefit to the department was high under the current process. The time and expense incurred for this process has been substantial. He felt it would behoove the department to have the Governor make a direct appointment. The new Governor has been very open to sitting down with everyone to gather information for this process. The current process gives the public a bad perspective. There are other advisory groups within the department already in place.

It was noted that no Agriculture Department Advisory Committee members were present at this hearing.

Senator Huelskamp moved to report **SB 135**, concerning meat and poultry inspections, favorably for passage. Senator Taddiken seconded the motion, and the motion passed with no opposition.

Chairman Schmidt announced that the Committee would meet on Monday and Tuesday next week.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 a.m.



Kansas Farm Bureau

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PUBLIC POLICY STATEMENT

Senate Committee on Agriculture

RE: SB 145 – an act eliminating the state board of agriculture.

February 19, 2003
Topeka, Kansas

Presented by:
Janet McPherson, Assistant Director
Governmental Relations

Chairman Schmidt and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on Senate Bill 145. I am Janet McPherson, Assistant Director of Governmental Relations for the Kansas Farm Bureau. KFB policy is supportive of the statutory responsibilities given to the agriculture board, and as such, we oppose SB 145.

We support the existence of the State Advisory Board of Agriculture and its role in providing advice to the Secretary of Agriculture and the Governor. The duties and responsibilities of the Board should include oversight to ensure the agency's regulations are effective in protecting public safety, are reasonable, scientifically-based and promote a strong agricultural industry.

The board, by statute, serves in an advisory capacity to the Governor and Secretary on Department legislative initiatives. Statute also prescribes that the board review and make recommendations on proposed rules and regulations, or on proposed revised rules and regulations prior to the submission of such to the Secretary of Administration. The board also has advisory responsibility to the Kansas Department of Commerce Agriculture Products Development Division, and the division must report to the board at least twice per year. The agriculture board also advances recommendations for Secretary of Agriculture candidates to the Governor.

Kansas Farm Bureau members discussed the role of the board and affirmed its value during the policy development process this past year. This bill would remove an opportunity for board review and counsel regarding administrative policy and the boards role in secretary selection, as such, we respectfully ask the committee to consider the broad implications of this bill not pass SB 145 favorably. Thank you.

*Senate Agriculture
Attachment 1
2-19-03*