



The Kansas Rural Center
PO Box 133
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KANSAS RURAL CENTER

TESTIMONY ON HB 2502 FOR THE SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE,

The Kansas Rural Center is opposing HB 2502, amending the procedure for a county to grant permission to establish swine production facilities, on the following grounds:

- **We are concerned about the fast-track nature of this bill through the legislature thus far, despite its potential for great economic, environmental and quality-of-life impact on the citizens and farmers of our state.** When originally crafted some 20 years ago, this law provoked significant public contention, protest and controversy, indicating that it is not a matter to be rushed or taken lightly. We would request more time for public review and inquiry into the merits of these changes to the original law.
- **We are concerned that Western Kansas has received the bulk of attention because it has been targeted as an opportunity zone for large-scale corporate swine facilities, but this law would be applied throughout the state.** Has enough attention been paid and review provided as to the regulatory framework statewide, before we would welcome corporate facilities in our more populous areas? Kansas is downsizing environmental programs, especially for water quality. Will there be enough programs with staff to ensure an environmental balance to these large swine facilities, once approved by county commissions?
- **We are concerned that large-scale corporate swine facilities may result in unanticipated economic consequences for our small farmers, food security and rural economic development.** Has the Department of Agriculture ensured it has fully embraced Governor Brownback's Road Map for Kansas, by also taking into account how to keep our local businesses vibrant (of which small and existing farms should be included)? Will these facilities take local workers from local farms, or entrap farmers into potentially disadvantageous contractual arrangements? What are the average wages of the majority of the jobs they will bring, and are they quality jobs or exploitive jobs? If pork is a great business opportunity, why do we need to make it easier for out-of-state corporations? Why not assist our current operations in expanding, or assist beginning farmers, to keep profits in Kansas?
- **We are concerned that removal of the public review for corporate swine permits decreases our rural citizens' role in their own future.**

For these reasons, we ask that the proposed amended law be submitted for public deliberation and regulatory review, allowing these issues to be thoroughly examined by the officials and citizens of Kansas.

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