



Senate Agriculture Committee

Hearing for HB 2502

February 15, 2012

Neutral Testimony Submitted by Christy Hopkins, Greeley County Community Development

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the HB2502. This legislation does not directly impact Greeley County as the reversal of the ban for swine production was completed by our residents in 2009. At that time, our residents believed that the county wide ban was unnecessarily harming our ability to expand our economy. In lifting the ban, community members overturned their 1997 decision, which had allowed dairy operations but banned the presence of corporate swine operations in the county.

Greeley County has a 2010 population of 1,247 down from 1,534 in the 2000 census. The continued population decline is of great concern for our residents. Governor Brownback has made expanding animal agriculture a part of his plan to improve the economy of Kansas. Agriculture is the mainstay of our economy and expanding animal agriculture will help us add jobs and investment in our county.

We are currently working with a company to locate new facilities in Unified Greeley County. The required permits have been approved and we expect construction to begin this spring on a sixty-barn site. These facilities, when operating, will follow Kansas Department of Health & Environment and Kansas Department of Agriculture rules for operating and water permits. We believe the staff of these agencies do a good job of protecting our existing facilities and believe additional facilities will be monitored in the same way.

Residents of Greeley County recognized that government should not select the winners and losers in our economy. Arbitrarily limiting what types of businesses can operate in Kansas is not a long-term growth plan and in areas largely suited to agriculture, can only lead to further depopulation.

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