

MINUTES OF THE SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Derek Schmidt at 8:30 a.m. on February 20, 2001 in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present: Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research Department
 Jill Wolters, Revisor of Statutes
 Betty Bomar, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

 Doug Wareham, Kansas Fertilizer & Chemical Association and the Kansas
 Grain & Feed Association
 Dennis Morrice, Kansas Soybean Association
 Bill Fuller, Kansas Farm Bureau
 Paul Johnson

Others attending: See attached list

SR 1804 - A resolution supporting agricultural biotechnology

Doug Wareham, Kansas Fertilizer & Chemical Association and the Kansas Grain & Feed Association, testified in support of **SR 1804**, state the “genetic engineering” of products must be closely scrutinized by federal regulatory agencies to ensure safety for food and food ingredients produced by biotechnology. This lesson has been well learned from the Starlink corn experience. Benefits of biotechnology in agriculture are significant from better quality, better tasting and more nutritious foods to more efficient methods to grow crops with less impact on the environment to new solutions to help feed the growing world population.

Mr. Wareham stated that **SR 1804** contains provisions that may be inappropriate for a Kansas resolution, for example the reference to the Western Governor’s Association Resolution. The industry requests an opportunity to amend the Resolution prior to its adoption by the Committee. (Attachment 1)

Written testimony submitted by Kerri Ebert, President, Kansas Agricultural Alliance, supporting adoption of **SR 1804**, was distributed to members of the Committee. (Attachment 2)

Dennis Morrice, Executive Director, Kansas Soybean Association (KSA), testified in support of **SR 1804**, stating biotechnology is important to the state’s soybean industry. Last year more than 60% of the Kansas soybean crop was planted using biotechnology-derived varieties. KSA’s position is that every farmer should have the right to choose any crop protectant system that meets his or her needs, management abilities, and is cost effective. The KSA opposes any company introducing any product for open commercial sale that has not received appropriate clearance from all pertinent US government agencies, and has clearance for importation to all international markets. (Attachment 3)

Bill Fuller, Kansas Farm Bureau (KFB), testified in support of **SR 1804**, stating the KFB, at its Annual Meeting, adopted a policy on Biotechnology to support increased efforts through genetic engineering to develop consumer beneficial traits, to increase the marketability of products, to solve environmental concerns, to increase net farm income by decreasing input costs, and to improve product quality. The KFB is opposed to any law or regulation which requires registration of farmers who use or sell products approved for sale by the Food and Drug Administration, and the imposition by foreign countries of any import restrictions, labeling or segregation requirements of any genetically modified organism, once such a commodity has been certified by the scientific community as safe and not significantly different from other varieties of that commodity. The KFB supports increased efforts to educate the public worldwide regarding the safety and benefits of products developed through biotechnology. (Attachment 4)

CONTINUATION SHEET

Paul Johnson, a private citizen and small farmer, and a representative to the Midwest Sustainable Agriculture Working Group, testified on **SR 1804**, voiced his concern relating to agricultural biotechnology and raised questions as to: the number of patents pending, whether the patents are too broad, the liability issue, who is responsible for genetic drift and for keeping genetic engineered crops separate and their identity preserved.

Mr. Johnson suggested **SR 1804** be referred to an interim committee for an in-depth study and to address the labeling of genetic engineered products, the establishment of regulatory oversight, the patenting laws, liability, environmental monitoring and agricultural research priorities. Mr. Johnson testified the above questions must be answered before additional state legislation is enacted. (Attachment 5)

Written testimony from the Kansas Department of Agriculture supporting **SR 1804** was distributed to members of the Committee. (Attachment 6)

Written testimony from the Kansas Corn Growers Association/Kansas Grain Sorghum Producers supporting **SR 1804** was distributed to members of the Committee. (Attachment 7)

The hearing was concluded.

SB 59 - Update, clarify and streamline the Kansas dairy law

Senator Umbarger moved and seconded by Senator Downey, that SB 59 be amended at Page 5, Line 18 following the period (.) by inserting the following: “All rules and regulation of the department of agriculture concerning milk, cream and dairy products in existence on the effective date of this act shall continue to be effective until revised, amended, revoked or nullified pursuant to law.”; and at Page 10, Line 31, insert “(d)”. The voice vote was in favor of the motion.

Senator Umbarger moved, seconded by Senator Downey, that SB 59 be recommended favorably for passage as amended. The voice vote was in favor of the motion.

SB 162 - Kansas veterinary practice act; license fee increase, application for exam, definition of veterinary prescription drugs.

Senator Morris moved, seconded by Senator Huelskamp that SB 162 be recommended favorably for passage. The voice vote was in favor of the motion.

The Chairman indicated his intention to pass over **SB 61**. There was no objection, and no action was taken.

The Chairman asked whether any committee member wanted the Committee to act on **SB 223**. No committee member requested action on the bill. No action was taken.

Upon motion by Senator Huelskamp, seconded by Senator Tyson, the Minutes of the February 13th and February 14th meeting were unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

The next meeting was scheduled for February 27, 2001.