

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

CONTINUATION SHEET

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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.