

**Testimony on Senate Bill 308
House Agriculture Committee
Monday, March 16, 2020
Farah S. Ahmed, MPH, PhD
Kansas Department of Health and Environment**

Chairman Highland and members of the House Agriculture committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on Senate Bill 308. Senate Bill 308 would amend existing law concerning milk, cream, dairy products and on-farm retail sale of milk. The amendment would abolish the limit on promotion and advertising of on-farm retail sale of ungraded raw milk and ungraded raw milk-products beyond the premises of the dairy farm if the label and advertisement for the products contains language specified in the bill.

Raw milk can carry dangerous germs, such as *Brucella*, *Campylobacter*, *Cryptosporidium*, *E. coli*, *Listeria*, and *Salmonella*, which can pose serious health risks to people. The risk of getting sick from drinking contaminated raw milk is greater for infants and young children, older adults, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems, such as people with cancer or who have had an organ transplant. But even healthy people can get very sick if they drink raw milk contaminated with harmful germs. From 1993 through 2012, 127 outbreaks reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention were linked to raw milk. These outbreaks included 1,909 illnesses and 144 hospitalizations.

The KDHE Secretary, under K.S.A. 65-101, has the authority to investigate the causes and prevent the spread of diseases. Under that authority, KDHE investigates reports of foodborne illnesses. Between 2017 and 2019, of the foodborne illness complaints investigated by KDHE, we had 54 cases that reported consuming unpasteurized milk or an unpasteurized milk product. Because of the inherent risk in consuming unpasteurized milk products, KDHE recognizes the need to include safety information in the labeling and advertising of these products. KDHE strongly supports amending SB 308 to include language that clearly states that consuming raw milk could cause a food-borne illness:

New Section 1. (a) The on-farm retail sale of milk or milk products shall be lawful, so long as each container of unpasteurized raw milk sold or offered for sale bears a label that is clearly visible and states the following:

Protect and Improve the Health and Environment of all Kansans

- (1) *"This product contains raw milk that is not pasteurized and, as a result, may contain organisms that cause food-borne illness.";* and
- (2) *includes the address to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's raw milk website or a similar government operated website.*

(b) Any person who engages in the on-farm retail sale of milk or milk products may advertise such milk or milk-products if such advertisement states the following:

- (1) "This product contains raw milk that is not pasteurized; and*
- (2) includes the address or link to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's raw milk website or a similar government operated website.*

If such advertisement is in print or other written or visual form, these statements shall be clearly visible.

Thank you for the opportunity to present KDHE's position supporting SB 308. KDHE respectfully requests the committee to pass SB 308 with the suggested amendments.