

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dan Johnson at 3:30 p.m. on March 20, 2000, in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Representative Thimesch - excused

Committee staff present: Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research Department
Gordon Self, Revisor of Statutes Office
Kay Scarlett, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Jere White, Executive Director, Kansas Corn Growers Association and Kansas Grain Sorghum Producers Association
Leslie Kaufman, Assistant Director, Public Policy Division, Kansas Farm Bureau
John Garlinger, Public Information Officer, Kansas Department of Agriculture
Tom Tunnell, Kansas Grain and Feed Association
Mike Beam, Executive Secretary, Cow-Calf/Stocker Division, Kansas Livestock Association
Brett Myers, Executive Vice President, Kansas Association of Wheat Growers (written only)

Others attending: See attached list

Hearing and action on SCR 1626 - Concurrent Resolution urging Congress to remove the executive branch's unilateral trade sanction authority on food and medicine.

Chairman Johnson opened the hearing on **SCR 1626**.

Jere White, Executive Director, Kansas Corn Growers Association and Kansas Grain Sorghum Producers Association, testified in support of **SCR 1626**. He said that trade barriers and competitors' export subsidies prevent the U. S. grain industry from realizing the full potential of our comparative advantage in production, that weak export performance contributes to the low prices that plague producers today. He said the U.S. government should weigh the cost to our own economy before imposing unilateral sanctions around the world. (Attachment 1)

Leslie Kaufman, Assistant Director, Public Policy Division, Kansas Farm Bureau, spoke in support of **SCR 1626** to restrict the executive branch's unilateral trade sanction authority on food. Kansas Farm Bureau believes agriculture products should be exempt from all embargoes and sanctions except in cases of armed conflict, and in such circumstances the embargo should apply to all trade, technology, and exchanges. (Attachment 2)

John Garlinger, Public Information Officer, Kansas Department of Agriculture, appeared in support of **SCR 1626** to send a message to Congress that we join them in rejecting unilateral trade sanctions and favor a policy that food should not be used as a weapon – a weapon which harms farmers and ranchers, while often having little effect on the target nation. He said that three things can happen when agricultural sanctions go into effect: exports drop, prices drop, and farmers and ranchers lose their share of the world market. (Attachment 3)

Tom Tunnell, Kansas Grain and Feed Association, testified in support of **SCR 1626** to remove the executive branch's unilateral trade sanction authority on food. He said that farmers' ability to produce must be matched by aggressive federal policy designed to create new markets and increase the United States' world market share of grain exports. He noted that restricting exports exacerbates the negative financial impact to producers in this state and negatively contributes to the excess grain carry-over stocks that lead to continued depressed prices and the grain

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storage shortfall. (Attachment 4)

Mike Beam, Executive Secretary, Cow-Calf/Stocker Division, Kansas Livestock Association, appeared in support of **SCR 1626**. He discussed pending legislation in Congress that would exclude food and medicine from U.S. sanctions unless Congress authorizes such action. (Attachment 5)

Brett Myers, Executive Vice President, Kansas Association of Wheat Growers, submitted written testimony in support of **SCR 1626** to remove the executive branch's unilateral trade sanction authority on food and medicine. He provided background information as well as the status of several current agricultural trade sanctions. (Attachment 6)

The Chairman closed the hearing and opened discussion on **SCR 1626**.

Representative Larkin offered a conceptual amendment to SCR 1626 to provide for an exception in times of armed conflict. Seconded by Representative Feuerborn, the motion carried.

Representative Larkin moved to recommend adoption of SCR 1626 as amended. The motion was seconded by Representative Dahl. The motion carried.

Dr. Robert Ziegler, Professor and Head of the Department of Plant Pathology, Kansas State University, gave an informative presentation on the benefits of biotechnology in the areas of medicine, improved varieties of plants and animals, and industrial applications. He discussed the safety of genetically modified organisms (GMO's) and their regulation by the Environmental Protection Agency, United States Department of Agriculture, and the Food and Drug Administration.

Minutes of the March 13 and 15 meetings were distributed. Chairman Johnson asked members to notify the committee secretary of any corrections or additions prior to 5:00 p.m., March 21, or they will be considered approved as presented.

The meeting adjourned at 4:42 p.m. There are no further meetings of the House Agriculture Committee scheduled for the 2000 legislative session.