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KANSAS CHAPTER

research studies have concluded that corporate hog factories have a long list of environmental and health consequences, for which include: incredible noxious odors, soil contamination from wastewater, respiratory problems to on-site workers and neighbors (from high levels of hydrogen sulfide, ammonias, and endotoxins), large methane emissions, nitrogen run-off pollution to water bodies, and more. **Corporate swine production is thus not cost-beneficial over the long-term if added costs to our health, environment, and property values if the fore-mentioned types of pollution are not prevented.** Kansans must be ensured, with a state guarantee, that our health and environmental safety will not be compromised by increasing corporate swine practices.

Finally, Kansas Sierra Club joins others in being very concerned that the increase in corporate hog farming and the decrease in small-scale hog farming are having a major negative economic impact on jobs, local businesses, and community development. Corporate Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) drive out more farming jobs than they provide and send revenues mostly out-of-state as opposed to the local area. Communities lose economic development opportunities with CAFOs lowering property values due to environmental and odor problems. HB 2502 supports the trend of stacking the competitive deck against ordinary Kansas hog farmers and lets corporate farms take markets, profits, and jobs from local farmers.

Before we consider sending HB 2502 forward, let us make sure we are indeed making the smart choice by altering our procedure for swine facilities to benefit corporate hog facilities. **We ought to reexamine corporate farming and its impact – economically, environmentally, and governmentally – on Kansas swine production and our communities' overall well-being.**

Again, thank you hearing these concerns. I will gladly stand for any questions at the appropriate time.

Sincerely,

Zack Pistora
KS Sierra Club
"Be Smart, Be Green"



KANSAS CHAPTER

**Testimony for Senate Agriculture
2/15/12
Opponent Testimony on HB 2502**

Chairman Taddiken and Honorable Members of the Committee:

I am Zack Pistora, Legislative Director for Kansas Chapter of the Sierra Club, and I thank you for the opportunity to speak against HB2502, which makes amendments to Kansas Corporate Farming Law concerning agriculture, especially relating to procedures in establishing swine production facilities.

There is no argument to the importance of our swine industry to the Kansas economy as well as to providing food to people around the world. Agriculture has and will continue to be one of our top specialties and assets for our state and our country, and Kansas should continue to advance our agriculture practices to be smarter and more valuable each and every day.

Unfortunately, the Kansas Sierra Club and Kansans all across the state feel that the bill today does not take a step in a smart direction, because it does not seem to serve the best interests of our communities; economically, ecologically, and governmentally.

HB 2502 turns the table on how our government engages Kansans on whether or not they would like a swine facility in their community. Instead of seeking residential approval upfront through a required electorate vote, the state would field concerns through a petition following a county commission decision. **While HB 2502 advocates claim a potential reduction in bureaucracy, we would contend that the procedural change would shift the bureaucratic responsibilities ex post-facto to the expense of the democratic nature of consulting our communities' people first before the swine corporation gets the go-ahead.** In essence, the new procedure risks putting corporations before communities and politics before people. Why make this change when our tried and true law has been seemingly fine in facilitating swine production for many years now?

Certainly, the legislative intent of HB 2502 is geared toward expediting corporate swine facilities to Kansas to benefit our economy, while still maintaining compliance with existing rules and regulations. While Kansas Sierra Club can appreciate the intent to catalyze swine production to benefit Kansas economically and still emphasize compliance with environmental safeguards, the impacts associated with this plan for increasing large-scale, corporate swine facilities without mandating additional assistance to our regulation offices would be seemingly problematic in a number of ways.

First, do our state regulators have adequate resources to address the increased load of environmental protection brought forth by adding large-scale swine facilities? Many