



UNITED TO GROW
FAMILY AGRICULTURE

Senate Agriculture Committee

Re: SB87 AN ACT concerning livestock; relating to the establishment of the Kansas equine education and promotion board

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Submitted by:

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Chairman Love and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 87.

Kansas Farmers Union is one of the state's oldest active general farm organizations, representing farmers and ranchers since 1907. Our primary goal is to sustain, strengthen, protect, and enhance the economic interests and quality of life for family farmers and ranchers and their rural communities.

Senate Bill 87 proposes paying for a proposed equine board by assessing "\$2 per ton of commercial equine feed sold in Kansas." This assessment is nothing more than a mandatory check-off or production tax, and it will, in turn, raise feed prices that are currently at all-time highs.

In regards to state commodity check-offs, Kansas Farmers Union's 2013 policy clearly states: "We support voluntary check-offs at point of sale," therefore, we stand in opposition to Senate Bill 87.

Kansas Farmers Union is not against support of research and public education and assistance programs for equine-related issues; promotion of the development and uses of equines in the state; or creation of public awareness of the value of equine activities in the state. We just believe, as we do with all check-off programs, that the funding of such programs should be done on a voluntary basis rather than mandatory.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony and will be happy to answer questions at the appropriate time.