

Testimony in Opposition to SB 405
JoAnn Farb, Lecompton Ks. Submitted Mar 5, 2018

I am a former microbiologist with the pharmaceutical giant Merck. Part of my job, involved touring large poultry and hog farms to help them prevent diseases that might threaten their profitability.

When traveling to these farms, before I was close enough to see any buildings and with windows rolled up, a choking stench infiltrated my car. Being inside the large windowless barns where thousands of animals were housed in extremely crowded conditions was something I will never forget. Clouds of flies were so thick I could have grabbed a handful right out of the air. My throat burned from the accumulated urine. Although workers wore ventilators, animals did not. Those that couldn't survive these conditions long enough to be slaughtered, sat in dead piles awaiting disposal. **If more of these come to Kansas, would KDHE be fully staffed to deal with all these decaying animals?**

That's why when my husband and I searched for land to build a secluded home, we looked carefully at zoning and land-use plans making sure no Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO's) were near. A home is most people's biggest investment. **SB 405, will pull the rug out from under home owners and is an economic threat to tens of thousands of rural residents who do not want live near this type of business.** Few are ever allowed to tour the big farms I did, because the animals in these facilities are so stressed from over-crowding they are vulnerable to otherwise common germs. I was required to suit up, put on a mask and step in solutions of bleach before I could enter. Germs were such a concern, some animal caretakers admitted to me they sprayed caustic germicides for floors directly onto the skin of pigs in an attempt to reduce disease. The fear of germs also serves to prevent the public from seeing how terrible these places are. Cleaner Kansas soils and water not yet, "disease tainted" by chicken and swine factories must be very appealing to those seeking to profit from CAFOs.

It's not possible to contain the smells, water pollution, air pollution, toxic chemicals and diseases from these confined animal feeding operations. That's why across the country, communities – like Tonganoxie so vigorously oppose them. I have compiled news of the harms of this industry on my website: <http://joannfarb.weebly.com/tyson.html> There you will see that intensive animal farms have a long history of flouting the law and getting away with it. They victimize law abiding citizens, destroy other businesses, and degrade the quality of life in communities they come to dominate. **SB 405 is BIG government interference in the free market for the specific benefit of a privileged few at the expense of everyone else.**

Rolling out the red carpet for Big Chicken in Kansas is short sighted. Concentrations of confined birds facilitates new strains of bird flu. Pig farming makes this equation worse. That's because bird flu is more easily spread to pigs, than humans, but once it jumps to pigs, mutates to more easily infect humans. Poultry may be projected to be the most consumed protein in 2020, but a bigger trend is on the horizon. Plant-based "meat alternatives" with lower carbon and water footprints, which do not require violence to produce, are growing so rapidly that even Tyson Foods is investing in them! **What will happen to Ks farmers who invest millions in building these confinement poultry houses, 10-20 years from now when the market for poultry declines?** Will they appreciate SB 405 paving the way for their economic ruin? Consider Arkansas, a top producer for domestic rice (in addition to chicken.) Because of the poultry industry's short-sighted practices, informed consumers around the world are shunning Arkansas rice. Why? It's contaminated with arsenic – which was deliberately fed to chickens to control parasites. Arkansas soils are so contaminated, rice farmers filed a lawsuit. Arsenic is in the chicken too. John Hopkins School of Public Health found that 70% of the chicken they tested had levels of arsenic that exceeded what FDA considered safe. Know what else is in chicken? E coli that causes bladder infections. We spend over a billion dollars a year treating these. Now DNA studies show that the e coli causing these infections is coming from chicken. My website JoAnnFarb.com has links to substantiate all that I have said here.

Please vote, "No" on SB 405.