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House Committee on Agriculture
3-6-18
Donn Teske testifying for Kansas Farmers Union.
Opposition testimony

Thank you Chairman Hoffman, for taking my testimony today in opposition to SB 405.

Kansas Farmers Union policy is clear in our opposition to industrial factory farming.

I consider it amusing the referring to the contract growers for this industry in the role that they are family farmers, they don't own any of the things that make money (chickens) but they are forced to own all of the things that cost money and hold risk like the facility (to the spec of the contractor). They do not control the inputs, the chicks are delivered without input from the grower, the grain is delivered and with no input from the grower. Let us not forget why corporate agriculture contracts this portion of the business out; it is the risky side. This system is set up for Tyson to make money and control its risk, not the farmer.

We are also opposed to Kansas bribing industrial Ag to come into the state like it appears they will be doing with the Tyson plant, and like they do with industrial dairies and doing that in the name of economic development. That isn't economic development, that is rural community killers. And to get more to the point we oppose our state government messing with the environmental regulations to be more enticing to this shameful industry.

We are deeply offended at calling this bill a "clarification" in an attempt to draw as little attention as possible following the events at Tonganoxie. Rural communities should be able to reject industry such as this if they so choose. If a community wants a Tyson plant, we are not going to stand in their way, frankly we would like the opportunity to sell them some grain, but that community should have the choice and that opportunity should be added to this bill if it moves forward.

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