

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Karin Brownlee at 8:30 A.M. on February 5, 2008 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Nick Jordan- excused
Jim Barone- excused

Committee staff present:

Jennifer Thierer, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Dennis Hodgins, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Jason Long, Revisor of Statutes
Jackie Lunn, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Senator Morris, President, Kansas Senate
Edie Dahlsten, Vice President, Kansas Farm Bureau
Carolyn Dunn, Citizen, Stafford County
Randall Allen, Kansas Association of Counties
Don Macke, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship
Melissa Ness, St. Francis Community Services
L. Earl Watkins, Sunflower Electric Power Corporation
Eric Depperschmidt, wKREDA
Kim Winn, League of Kansas Municipalities
Randal Hrabe, Northwest Kansas Planning & Development Commission
Stan Ahlerich, President, Kansas, Inc.

Others attending:

See attached list.

To read testimony submitted by conferees go to

[http://skyways.lib.ks.us/government/KansasSenateCommerceCommittee.](http://skyways.lib.ks.us/government/KansasSenateCommerceCommittee)

SB 453--Establishing the Kansas commission on rural policy

Chairperson Brownlee called on Jason Long, Revisor's Office, to explain **SB 453**. Mr. Long presented written copy of his explanation of the bill. (Attachment 1) Mr. Long stated that **SB 453** established the Kansas Commission on Rural Policy (KCPR) and that it would be an independent entity whose purpose is to make rural Kansas the most desirable area in which to conduct, facilitate, support and finance rural business, cultural development and entrepreneurship, and to make Kansas a national leader in the creation and implementation of strategies to foster leadership, the retention of youth, development of entrepreneurship and encouragement of local wealth generation.

Upon the conclusion of Mr. Long's explanation of the bill, Chairperson Brownlee opened the hearing on **SB 453** and introduced Senator Morris, President of the Senate, to give his testimony as a proponent of **SB 453**. Senator Morris presented written testimony (Attachment 2) which can be found in its entirety on the link listed above.

Upon the conclusion of Senator Morris' testimony, Chairperson Brownlee announced questions would be held until the completion of all the testimony of the proponents. With that said, Chairperson Brownlee introduced Ms. Edie Dahlsten, Vice President, Kansas Farm Bureau, to give her testimony as a proponent of **SB 453**. Ms. Dahlsten presented written testimony (Attachment 3) which can be found in its entirety on the link listed above.

Chairperson Brownlee introduced Ms. Carolyn Dunn, appearing as a private citizen from Stafford County, to give her testimony as a proponent of **SB 453**. Ms. Dunn presented written testimony (Attachment 4) which can be found in its entirety on the link listed above.

Chairperson Brownlee introduced Mr. Randall Allen, Kansas Association of Counties, to give his testimony

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as a proponent of **SB 453**. Mr. Allen presented written testimony ([Attachment 5](#)) which can be found in it's entirety on the link listed above.

Chairperson Brownlee introduced Mr. Don Macke, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship, to give his testimony as a proponent of **SB 453**. Mr. Macke presented written testimony ([Attachment 6](#)) which can be found in it's entirety at the link listed above.

Chairperson Brownlee introduced Ms. Melissa Ness, St. Francis Community Services, to give her testimony as a proponent of **SB 453**. Ms. Ness presented written testimony ([Attachment 7](#)) which can be found in it's entirety on the link listed above.

Chairperson Brownlee introduced Mr. L. Earl Watkins, Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, to give his testimony as a proponent of **SB 453**. Mr. Watkins presented written testimony ([Attachment 8](#)) which can be found in it's entirety on the link listed on page 1 of these minutes..

Chairperson Brownlee introduced Mr. Eric Depperschmidt, wKREDA, to give his testimony as a proponent of **SB 453**. Mr. Depperschmidt presented written testimony ([Attachment 9](#)) which can be found in its entirety on the link listed above by date of meeting and name.

Chairperson Brownlee introduced Ms. Kim Winn, League of Kansas Municipalities, to give her testimony as a proponent of **SB 453**. Ms. Winn presented written testimony ([Attachment 10](#)) which can be found in its entirety on the link listed above.

Upon the conclusion of the testimony of Ms. Winn, Chairperson Brownlee called the Committee's attention to the "written only" proponent testimony from the following:

(All "written only" testimonies listed below can be found in their entirety on the link listed above)

Dana Peterson, Kansas Agriculture Alliance (KAA) ([Attachment 11](#))
Paul Beck, Kansas Legislative Policy Group (KLPG) ([Attachment 12](#))
Steve Baccus, President, Kansas Farm Bureau ([Attachment 13](#))
Nancy Weeks, Kansas County Treasurers Association ([Attachment 14](#))
Kirk Heger, Southwest Kansas Irrigation Association ([Attachment 15](#))
Becky Goss, Kansas Association of Community Foundations ([Attachment 16](#))
Doug Wareham, Kansas Bankers Association ([Attachment 17](#))
Bob Cole, Pottawatomie Economic Development ([Attachment 18](#))

Chairperson Brownlee opened the floor for questions of the proponents of **SB 453**.

The Rural Policy Institute was discussed along with the fiscal note for the bill. It was noted that the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship is a public non-profit organization out of Columbia University , University of North Carolina, and the University of Nebraska; with Mr. Macke being based out of Lincoln, Nebraska for fifteen years. Senator Kelly has concerns that they are growing government with this bill and could be overlapping or competing with other programs already in place. It was noted by Senator Morris that the intent of this bill is that the Rural Commission would be a facilitator working with existing programs and would make efforts not to compete with existing programs.

Upon the conclusion of questions and answers, Chairperson Brownlee called the Committee's attention to the "written only" opponent testimony from the following:

Secretary Adrian Polansky, Kansas Department of Agriculture ([Attachment 19](#))

Next Chairperson Brownlee introduced Randal Hrabe, Northwest Kansas Planning & Development Commission, to give his testimony as a neutral party to **SB 453**. Mr. Hrabe presented written testimony ([Attachment 20](#)) which can be found in its entirety on the link listed on page 1 of these minutes.

Chairperson Brownlee stated the Committee was running short on time and she would hear the testimony of

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Wally Kearns, Kansas Small Business Center, next week and then she introduced Mr. Stan Ahlerich to give his testimony as a neutral party to **SB 453**. Mr. Ahlerich presented written testimony ([Attachment 21](#)) which can be found in its entirety on the link listed on page 1 of these minutes.

Upon the conclusion of Mr. Ahlerich's testimony, Chairperson Brownlee asked the Committee to read over all the testimony and announced that she will be keeping the hearing open. She stated the Committee needs to figure out how to accomplish the goal of this bill in the best way possible. She then called the Committee's attention to the "written only" neutral testimony from the following:

Secretary David Kerr, Department of Commerce ([Attachment 22](#))

Chairperson Brownlee adjourned the meeting at 9:30 a.m. with the next meeting scheduled for February 6, 2008 at 8:30 a.m. in room 123 S.