

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman John Faber at 3:30 P.M. on March 13, 2008, in Room 783 of the DSOB.

All members were present except:

Representative Vaughn Flora - excused
Representative Carl Holmes - excused
Representative Josh Svaty - excused

Committee staff present:

Raney Gilliland, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Hank Avila, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Gordon Self, Revisor of Statutes
Kristen Kellems, Revisor of Statutes
Florence Deeter, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Kenneth Nelson, Superintendent, Kansas Bostwick Irrigation District #2
Brad Bryant, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State
Senator Mark Taddington, District 21 {Written Only}

Others attending:

See attached list.

Special guests in attendance today are Representative Faber's grandsons, John, Aaron, and Mark Faber, who served as pages in the House of Representatives.

Hearing on SB 558 - Irrigation districts; conducting elections by mail

Kenneth Nelson, Superintendent of the Kansas Bostwick Irrigation District #2, spoke as a proponent of **SB 558**, saying the bill needed to be amended to address eligible voters outside the designated election-law boundaries (Attachment 1). Mr. Nelson said amending the law to include mail-in ballots would simplify the election process and possibly increase voter response. He indicated the aging of the population in the two-county area also exacerbates participation in traveling to election sites.

Brad Bryant, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, testified as a proponent of **SB 558** raising questions and proposing an amendment to clarify and strengthen the bill's provisions (Attachment 2). He said the proposed amendment would take the election to be conducted by mail out of the original mail ballot act which does not apply to water districts. Mr. Bryant explained that the county election officer would be required to submit a plan to the Secretary of State's office and the procedures outlined in the statutes would need to be met. He said that, because of differences in election for irrigation districts, the recommendation to amend the bill as proposed would help to clarify the intent of the bill.

Staff Raney Gilliland, Kansas Legislative Research Department, requested clarification on the proposed wording of the amendment. The word *advance* would replace the word *absentee* wherever it is used within the language of the bill. Mr. Bryant said the absentee ballots were available originally for military personnel who were serving outside the country.

Written testimony was submitted by Senator Mark Taddington, District #21, who introduced the bill at the request of the Bostwick Irrigation District (Attachment 3).

The Chairman closed the hearing on **SB 558**.

The Chairman called attention to **SB 474 - Controlled shooting areas; field trials**. Representative Grange made a motion to recommend the bill as favorable for passage. Representative Powell seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The Chairman asked the committee to consider **SB 475 - Kansas hunters feeding the hungry, inc.** Representative Powell requested an amendment to have a checkoff funding process on Kansas income tax

CONTINUATION SHEET

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returns. Moneys from the fund would be placed in the Hunters Feeding the Hungry, Inc. Representative Wolf seconded the motion. After discussion, the motion to amend SB 475 failed.

Representative Powell moved to recommend SB 475 as favorable for passage and place it on the Consent Calendar. Representative Moxley seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The Chairman called for consideration **SB 557 - Department of Agriculture, certification of free sale; food safety**. Staff Raney Gilliland reviewed the bill for the committee saying clarification was needed in the transfer of duties in 2004 from the Kansas Department of Environment to the Kansas Department of Agriculture. He said the new components of the bill include a \$5.00 reinstatement fee when license renewal is delinquent, and authorization of a combined license. Mr. Gilliland indicated the bill allows the Secretary of Agriculture to issue certificates of free sale; maximum fee is \$25.00 per certificate.

Representative Feuerborn made a motion to recommend SB 557 as favorable for passage. Representative Powell seconded. The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for March 17, 2008, at 3:30 p.m.