

**House Committee on Agriculture
Opposition Testimony to House Bill 2530
Presented by Eric Stafford, Vice President of Government Affairs**

Tuesday, February 15, 2022

Mister Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Eric Stafford, Vice President of Government Affairs for the Kansas Chamber. The Kansas Chamber appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to House Bill 2530, which seeks to regulate labeling of “meat analog” or plant-based food products.

Our legislative agenda advocates for a “regulatory climate that promotes a healthy business climate and instills regulatory certainty.” We support a regulatory climate that supports free enterprise and encourages competition. HB 2530 simply put places restrictions on competition under the guise of consumer protection, and the bill is so restrictive, businesses selling meat analog products would be forced to print labels specific for sale in the state of Kansas.

Last fall in discussions with proponents to HB 2530, we offered amendments that would make the bill consistent with the large majority of states that have enacted this type of language. That language would allow for the use of plant-based, vegan, meatless and other comparable terms, but that language was rejected by representatives from the Kansas Livestock Association as a “red line” to the bill.

Today we are debating whether government’s role is to protect consumers from products being sold as an alternative beef, poultry and pork. Are consumers in need of such oversight to protect them from themselves to ensure they don’t buy the wrong product? Or are these alternative products sold today sufficiently marketed as an alternative to meat?

Are hamburgers misleading? They contain no ham, only beef. Do Zebra Cakes contain zebra meat, or dino nuggets dinosaur meat? Boneless wings are not actually wings. And plant-based foods are clearly not meat. They’re plant-based alternative sources of protein for individuals who prefer to not eat meat.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to House Bill 2530, and I am happy to answer any questions at the appropriate time.