

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Larry Powell at 9:00 a.m. on February 3, 2011, in Room 783 in the Docking State Office Building.

All members were present except:

Representative Dan Kerschen – Excused
Representative Michael Peterson - Excused

Committee staff present:

Sean Ostrow, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Raney Gilliland, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Michael Wales, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Kay Scarlett, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Dr. Tom Lenz, DVM

Others attending:

See attached list.

Chris Wilson, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, requested introduction of a committee bill to update the Kansas Plant Pest Act. There being no objection, Chairman Powell said this request would be introduced as a committee bill.

Dr. Tom Lenz, DVM, presented an overview of the “unwanted” horse in the United States. Top contributors to the unwanted horse problem are the economy, irresponsible breeding, the closing of processing plants, and the high cost of euthanasia/carcass disposal. Solutions include educating owners to breed, purchase, and own responsibly; increase ability of private rescue/retirement facilities to care for unwanted horses; reopen U.S. processing plants; and increase options and resources to euthanize and dispose of unwanted horses. He said the “unwanted horse” problem cannot completely be eliminated. We can't prevent aging, all injuries, poor athletes, or unattractive horses. We can minimize it by buying rather than breeding, adopt rather than buy, find alternative careers, and euthanize rather than discard. (Attachment 1)

Representative O'Hara said that she didn't feel that her questions concerning the \$6 million federal grant for the broadband data and development program had been answered. Raney Gilliland will contact Carole Jordan, Director, Rural Development Division, Kansas Department of Commerce, for further explanation.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m. The next meeting of the House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee is scheduled for February 4, 2011.