

Written Testimony in support of the "Home Owned Carnival", Senate Bill 307
February 6, 2018
Kansas Senate
Federal and State Affairs Committee
The Honorable Senator Bud Estes, Chairman

Chairman Estes, committee members, interested parties;

My name is Robert Loftin I am currently the Vice-President of the Wallace County Amusement Association. We operate a "Home Owned" carnival, or amusement park, for about 15 hours, on three days during the Wallace County Fair each summer.

Our group was formed in 1975, when a group of local citizens purchased the ferris wheel, and a swing ride. Two years later they learned of the availability of several rides belonging to a small carnival in Loveland, Colorado that had been damaged by the Big Thompson Flood. Some of the factors leading to the decision to proceed with the purchase were the cost and scheduling of a traveling carnival for the fair.

From those humble beginnings, we have grown to a park with 12 rides, a bingo hall, concession area, ticket office, and a 40' by 80' enclosed event building with public restrooms. The land we occupy is owned by Wallace County.

Our rides are a nice mix for all age groups. We have homemade "Kiddie Cars", a small ferris wheel, a boat ride, a helicopter ride, and a carousel for small children. For larger kids through adult we have a Scrambler, a Roundup, roller coaster, a Bullet, and a Tilt-A-Whirl. To round out for all ages we have an Eli Bridge Ferris Wheel, and a local, "farm shop" built narrow gauge railroad that runs 3675 feet around the entire fairgrounds. All of the rides are surround by welded pipe, or ride manufacturer fencing, except the carousel and the railroad. The railroad is protected from the county road most of the way around.

Our current membership includes several farmers, farm equipment sales, and an electrician. ALL with farm backgrounds. These are people who understand equipment maintenance. All of our operators are volunteers, and most have been operating the same rides for several years.

While we are definitely not opposed to the inspections, mandated by Kansas' statute, we feel that a costly, formal inspection every 15 hours would be asking a lot. Also, ASTM INTERNATIONAL F24 Standards would dictate fencing requirements that might be very expensive, and create a hardship for an operation like ours to become compliant.

The bid from our insurance agent appears to more than double our premium to just over \$10,000 to comply with statute. That is \$667.00 an hour. We have never had a serious injury.

We feel that the DOL permit cost is more than fair to our operation.

I would invite each of you to visit the Wallace Co. Fair sometime, the last weekend in July, just to take in the experience. It is a time that many families take vacation time to re-unite with classmates, cousins, siblings, and old friends. Our customers are our children, grandchildren, close friends, and their families.

We would not take a chance with the safety of any of these people. If anything, we have been lax in not writing down everything we do to maintain the rides. We have already attended a workshop to help us to start with our record keeping and ride manual development.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration in this matter, and allowing me time to speak to you today.

I will gladly stand for questions.