

Written testimony on Senate Bill 2134

Chairman Luick and Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee
Members

My name is Kevin Herrmann, 300 Fair St. SW, Beulah, ND 58523. I am in support of Senate Bill 2134. There has been an ongoing problem with having bee apiaries being placed very close to paved highways in the state of North Dakota. Every summer season, I hate driving on the highway system due to the bee apiaries being so close to road making my windshield going from safe to see out of too unsafe. An individual does not dare use windshield fluid because it will make the windshield worse. How many individuals keep warm soap water in their vehicle in order to stop every time to clean the windshield? Soap water seems to be best to get the honey off windshield. In some areas of North Dakota, there can be more than one apiary on a stretch of paved road where an individual are not able to find a different road to avoid the bee apiaries. The highest concentration of bee will be at the bee apiary location. Why does the state of North Dakota want the highest concentration of bees so close to pave highway?

There has been ongoing issue for many years of location of bee apiaries with legislative bill setback of bee apiary in 1989, 1995, 1997 and 2013 legislative sessions. I did testify in favor of House Bill 1343 in 2013 Legislative session with a setback of 660 yards of centerline of a paved road. I am sure the Beekeepers are going to tell the committee if this bill is passed of being a big hardship and loss of location areas to place a bee apiary. The Beekeepers can still place the bee apiary in

same land plat but just further from the road. Beekeepers' probably going to say the landowner is telling them where to put the bee apiary on the land which in fact there is limit number of landowners telling beekeeper where to put the bee apiary. I did grow up on farm north of Zap. Next, the beekeepers will probably say the bee apiary need to be close to water. I have observed many bee apiaries not very close to water such as stock ponds in pastures. Next, beekeepers will probably say bees fly long distances from bee apiary. The general public understands the distance the bees fly but the public just want the bee apiary further away from paved road. The beekeepers are going to say it could be in violation of farmer's right to farm. The landowner/farmer still has the right to have bee apiary on their land. Next, beekeepers might mention about motorcyclists should wear more protective riding gear in order to not get sting from the concentration of bees. When a motorcyclist comes across a concentration of bees, bee can get inside of a coat or helmet.

In the past, I did make complaints to North Dakota Department of Agriculture Apiary division about the location of bee apiary and Identification of beekeeper at the location. Apiary division would ask for plat number instead of which highway/mile marker. How many of the general public will have a plat book of own county they live at and plat books of other counties? I have experience in the past that individuals did not know who or how to make complaint too. Apiary division has said in the past they do not get many complaints. There might have been more complaints put on file in years past if the general public knew who to talk too and the type of information is needed to the Apiary division.

In 2015 legislative session, Senate Bill 2025 was introduced as a rewrite to the Apiary statute. Now, the beekeepers Identification number on the bee apiary box instead of main entrance which is supposed to be full view. There have been times not able to find Identification number in full view.

After the 2013 legislative session, there were limited few of beekeepers willing to keep their bee an apiary further away but now is not the case.

Bottom line the beekeepers want to put their bee apiaries as close to paved highway even though loss of bees will be greater by the highway. Every year the public hear from the beekeepers how bad the losses of bees but will not acknowledge placing the bee apiary too close to highway is part of reason.

I am asking Senate Agriculture and Veteran Affairs committee members to a DO PASS on Senate Bill 2134

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