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ROLL NUMBER

DESCRIPTION

2106

2007 SENATE AGRICULTURE

SB 2106

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. 2106

Senate Agriculture Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: January 11, 2007

Recorder Job Number: 973

Committee Clerk Signature



Minutes:

Sen. Tim Flakoll- chairman opens the hearing on SB 2106, for an act to amend and reenact section 43-43-05 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to environmental health practitioners. All members (7) were present.

No one testified in favor of the bill.

Dr. Andrea Drondahl, director of the state meat and poultry inspection program for the North Dakota department of Agriculture testified in opposition of the bill. See attached testimony.

Sen. Klein- the environmental health's practitioners are who? Who belongs to that?

Dr. Andrea Drondahl- the environmental health practitioners any person in this state that inspects food or a food product.

Sen. Klein- so you are then asking to require them to be more trained? Do they crossover from what your meat inspectors do is that why we are asking for this?

Dr. Andrea Drondahl- what happened is that the environmental health practitioners act was passed in 1986 and what it was doing is was bringing a higher degree of professionalism among those who inspected food products. When the state meat inspection program came into place it was agreed that they fell under this requirement and needed to pursue a credential at the time it was a credential called the registered sanitarian and required studying for certain

test materials and passing a examination in earning this credential. Two years ago we worked on it and said that this really doesn't really apply to our meat inspectors.

Sen. Klein- so do these people work for the health department then?

Dr. Andrea Grondahl- most environmental health practitioners work under the state department of health for the local jurisdictions that work under the department of health.

Keith Johnson a environmental health practitioner, and Administrator for Custer Health testified in opposition to the bill.

Keith Johnson- we license credentialed practitioners that work for both the state health department in food and in the district in the general capacity. For many years that was the only game in town, was the general license. They had to pass a national exam to prove competency it has done wonders for inspections. Along the way though more and more specialists have come into play. When the request came in to look at the dairy and the meat inspectors we really had no problem in looking into that and finding it to be very adequate in making it equivalent to the certified food safety professional. So we will basically be looking at three different certification and licensers the registered sanitarian or department health specialist, the certified food safety professional which will also include the meat inspectors. It will certify licenses and that's really all the licensure board is interested in.

Sen. Klein- its seems we may have a duplication with meat inspection and health inspection, how is it done over at Custer?

Keith Johnson- its done exactly the same way.

Sen. Flakoll closed the hearing.

Sen. Klein motioned for a Do Not Pass and was seconded by **Sen. Taylor**. The motioned was carried on a roll call vote of 7 yeas 0 nays 0 absent. **Sen. Heckaman** was designated to carry the bill to the floor.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2106: Agriculture Committee (Sen. Flakoll, Chairman) recommends DO NOT PASS
(7 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2106 was placed on the
Eleventh order on the calendar.

2007 TESTIMONY

SB 2106



600 E Boulevard Ave., Dept. 602
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**Testimony of Dr. Andrea Grondahl
State Meat Inspection Director
Senate Bill 2106
Senate Agriculture Committee
Roosevelt Room
January 11, 2007**

Chairman Flakoll and members of the Agriculture Committee, I am Dr. Andrea Grondahl ,
Director of the State Meat and Poultry Inspection Program for the North Dakota Department of
Agriculture. If the rules would allow for me to withdraw this bill, I would be doing so today.
Since they do not, I am here today to ask you for a do not pass on SB 2106 which changes the
state's environmental health practitioners law.

This bill was introduced at the request of the Agriculture Commissioner. It would have
exempted state meat inspectors from being licensed under N.D.C.C. 43-43-05. Since this bill
has been introduced, the State Board of Environmental Health practitioners has met and agreed to
change the rules pertaining to the licensing process. I would like to summarize the rule changes
agreed upon for the official record.

State meat inspectors undergo a rigorous training process in order to make them competent in their job. The training is quite extensive and inclusive of their job duties. However, the Environmental Health Practitioners Act demands more of meat inspectors by requiring additional training and credentialing above and beyond what they already do, it does nothing to further promote their competence. We believed that this legislation would be necessary to change the current requirement. It was later brought to our attention that changes might be better made by convening the Environmental Health Practitioners Board, which was done earlier this week.

The Board agreed to accept one of the meat inspection training courses and test already in place as equivalent to the credential currently required. We believe this is an acceptable solution, and no longer need to pursue passage of this bill.

Therefore, Chairman Flakoll and committee members, I would like to recommend a "do not pass" on SB 2106. I would like to thank you for your time on this matter and would be happy to answer any questions you may have.