

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Gary Hayzlett at 1:30 p.m. on February 11, 2004 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative John Ballou- excused
Representative Paul Davis- excused
Representative Valdenia Winn- excused

Committee staff present:

Mary Galligan, Legislative Research Department
Hank Avila, Legislative Research Department
Bruce Kinzie, Revisor of Statutes Office
Betty Boaz, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Gene Latham, Manager, Southern Kansas Cotton Growers Cooperative, Inc.
Deb Miller, Secretary of KDOT
Deann Williams, KS Motor Carriers Association
Terry Holdren, KS Farm Bureau
Leslie Kaufman, KS Coop Council

Others attending:

See Attached List.

HB 2624 - Cotton modules, intrastate registration, special permits.

Chairman Hayzlett opened the hearings on **HB 2624** and introduced Gene Latham, Manager of the Southern Kansas Cotton Growers Cooperative, Inc. According to Mr. Latham, (Attachment #1) cotton gins operate from 14 to 24 hours per day, seven days per week during the harvest season. He said some of the fields are 150 miles or more from the gin. Mr. Latham said a limited number of module trucks are available and they must be able to work 24 hours per day to transport adequate numbers of modules to the gins. During wet periods, modules must be moved at night while the soil is frozen. Mr. Latham concluded by saying that they have to be able to move cotton modules during nighttime hours if the cotton industry in Kansas is to function, survive and grow.

The second proponent was Deb Miller, Secretary, Kansas Department of Transportation. Secretary Miller gave some background on the transport of cotton modules. (Attachment 2) According to Secretary Miller, currently Kansas law specifies that all over-dimensional loads may only be transported on Kansas highways during daylight hours, which is defined as 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset. She said adoption of this bill would allow over-dimensional cotton modules to be transported 24 hours a day, but would still require adherence to all other statutory mandates for such loads as well as all applicable regulations.

Chairman Hayzlett introduced the next proponent, Deann Williams, director of industry relations for the Kansas Motor Carriers Association. According to Ms. Williams (Attachment 3) the specially designed cotton modules must operate under a special permit issued by the Kansas Department of Transportation because the width of the vehicles exceeds the maximum width allowed for all other vehicles. Current operating guidelines only allow the operation of oversized vehicles during daylight hours and **HB 2624** would allow KDOT to issue a special permit to the cotton modules to operate 24 hours a day.

The next proponent introduced was Terry Holdren, Associate State Director, Governmental Relations for Kansas Farm Bureau. Mr. Holdren stated that Kansas Farm Bureau supports **HB 2624** because this action and the permit are needed in the cotton industry to facilitate the movement of cotton from field to the cotton gin during harvest.

Leslie Kaufman, Kansas Coop Council was the last proponent introduced in support of **HB 2624**. (Attachment 5) Two of their members are cotton co-ops. According to Ms. Kaufman the transportation

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arena is an area where Kansas is trying to fit new vehicle and delivery needs into existing state and federal parameters. Ms. Kaufman asked the Committee to look favorably on the proposal to broaden the time frame for hauling cotton modules.

Chairman Hayzlett drew the Committee's attention to written testimony submitted by Bob Miller (Attachment 6).

There were no other proponents and no opponents. The Chairman closed the hearing on **HB 2624**.

It was the Chairman's desire to work **HB 2624**. A motion to pass **HB 2624** was made by Representative Dreher, seconded by Representative Toelkes and the motion carried.

The Chairman called for final action on **HB 2143**. Bruce Kinzie explained two balloons prepared for **HB 2143**. After discussions Representative Vickrey made a motion to accept one balloon (Attachment 7), seconded by Representative Ballard and the motion carried for a substitute bill.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m. The next meeting will be on February 12, 2004, at 1:30 p.m. in Room 519-S.