

To: House Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development, Rep. Hutton, Chairman

From: Stacey Forshee, Cloud County Farm Bureau member and Director, Kansas Farm Bureau

Date: February 17, 2016

Re: Testimony HB 2595 – A bill reserving regulations of nutrition labeling for food menu items to the legislature

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Chairman Hutton and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify as a proponent on HB 2595. KFB is the state's largest general farm organization representing more than 40,000 farm and ranch families through our 105 county Farm Bureau Associations.

Farm Bureau policy supports consumer friendly, science-based labeling that provides consumers with useful information concerning ingredients and nutritional value. Our policy strictly opposes mandatory labeling of food products containing biotechnology; labeling that implies organic food is in any way superior to other farm products; and false, misleading, negative or deceptive marketing or labeling claims derived from the use of biotechnology traits and ingredients.

The federal government, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) all play roles in food safety and labeling. Because of the interstate nature of food and food products, it is imperative the federal government maintain the national, universal standard for all restaurant and vending machine labeling. Kansas Farm Bureau is working closely with U.S. Rep. Mike Pompeo and U.S. Senator Pat Roberts to ensure the federal government's regulations are safe, satisfactory and appropriate. In the absence of federal regulation on nutrition and menu labeling, the state of Kansas should exert authority and ensure fair and unbiased sound-science labeling is enacted in all 105 counties and all cities within the state.

Furthermore, Kansas Farm Bureau strongly supports Sec. 2 (b) (7) which will prohibit the state of Kansas and any political subdivision thereof from restricting the growing or raising of agricultural products approved by state and federal government. We have seen political subdivisions in others states limit agriculture producers from being able to raise or grown certain products based off of biased and non-science-based information, including misleading marketing ploys. We support the language in this bill restricting this from occurring in Kansas.

In closing, without a federal, uniform law regulating restaurant and vending machine nutrition and menu labeling, the state of Kansas should control such labeling and the growing or raising of agricultural products. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2595. We encourage you to vote favorably.