

Date: 2/2/2025  
Bill Number: HB 2158  
Position: Opposed  
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For Meeting On: February 5<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 PM  
Testimony By: Tim Urich  
On Behalf Of: T Creek Bees & Honey LLC, Tim Urich & Melissa Urich - Owners  
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Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee on Commerce, Labor, and Economic Development:

I am writing to express my opposition to House Bill 2158, which would allow beekeepers to sell honey and honeycomb to stores without being inspected or licensed by the Kansas Department of Agriculture.

My wife and I own T Creek Bees & Honey LLC near Berryton, KS, where we manage 300 beehives in Shawnee County. Our bees produce honey, which we sell to stores in Topeka. As a licensed food processor in Kansas, we have invested significant time, effort, and resources into ensuring that our honey production meets the highest safety and quality standards. We firmly believe that all honey producers who wish to sell their products wholesale should be held to the same standards.

Food safety regulations exist to protect consumers from potential health risks, including contamination and improper handling. Licensed food processors undergo inspections, maintain sanitary facilities, and follow strict guidelines to ensure their products are safe for public consumption. By exempting certain beekeepers from these regulations, HB 2158 creates an unfair and potentially hazardous double standard.

At T Creek, we have invested in a commercial space and have undergone training to ensure compliance with food safety regulations. This bill would allow others to bypass these critical steps, placing responsible beekeepers at a competitive disadvantage while exposing consumers to increased risks. If a beekeeper wishes to sell their honey in retail stores, they should be willing to meet the same regulatory standards as other food producers in the state.

When I approach a retailer in Topeka and provide a copy of my food processing license, they have confidence that the honey products on their store shelves are produced and packaged in a sanitary environment, following proper food safety practices. HB 2158 would create conditions in which honey is harvested and packaged on barn floors or on the same kitchen counters where families prepare dinner.

I urge the committee to reject HB 2158 in the interest of consumer safety, fair competition, and the integrity of the Kansas honey industry. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Tim Urich  
Owner, T Creek Bees & Honey LLC  
Berryton, KS