

02-01-25

HB2158

Support

Written Only

For the meeting on February 5 at 1:30 PM

Testimony by James Carpenter (Derby, KS)

On behalf of the Wichita Beekeeper Alliance and Carp's Bees (Derby, KS)

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Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee on Commerce, Labor, and Economic Development,

I am writing to you in support of HR2158.

I am a small-time beekeeper in the Wichita area, and, as a hobby that is now entirely out of control, I have taken it upon myself to support other local beekeepers. To help save the bees, we need more beekeepers. There is much passion among those who keep bees, and people do it for many reasons. Bees help the environment, and they can provide peace of mind to those with PTSD and stress issues. They provide a desperately needed local source of honey and other bee-related products and a small supplemental income for the beekeeping hobby.

Beekeeping is a fun yet risky activity because bees will swarm (disappear) or die due to pests and pesticides, so one of the ways we help sustain beekeepers is by selling honey. Beekeeping can be expensive, so this is vital to helping keep the beekeeping community in Kansas growing. There is tremendous demand for true local honey here in Wichita, and that demand can not always be sustained because there are not enough small-time beekeepers. We need more of them, and we need to support them with more than just at the seasonal farmer's market. Small local retailers and restaurant owners often ask if they can sell local honey. The answer is frequently "no" because of specific clean kitchen requirements. Yet, these same beekeepers are free to sell at a farmer's market following well-documented and supported cottage industry rules ("Foods Sold Direct to Consumers in Kansas: Regulations and Food Safety Best Practices," published by the Kansas Department of Agriculture).

Please help support this bill as we need to support the local small-time beekeepers and continue to help other local businesses by offering truly locally produced honey. Please support HR2158. Kansas beekeepers, local small businesses, and the bees are counting on you.

Sincerely,

James Carpenter

Senate Dist. 30 / House Dist. 81