

February 2, 2025

Bill number: HB2158

Position: Support

Testimony Type: In person

For Meeting on: February 5, 2025, 1:30 PM

Testimony By: Becky Tipton

On Behalf of: Kansas Honey Producers (President of association), NE Kansas Beekeepers, Country Creek Honey (personal business) Beekeepers of Shawnee County (teacher and master beekeeper)

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

It is my pleasure to speak with you today in support of HB 2158, which seeks to eliminate the requirement for a commercial kitchen license for small-scale beekeepers selling raw honey and honeycomb in retail settings.

This bill offers many benefits, safe and simple solutions for marketing honey to small scale farmers and businessmen and women.

*Small honey producers have limited availability to selling their honey without the burden of creating/renting a commercial kitchen. This option is either economically challenging or nonexistent in our most rural Kansas counties. This bill eliminates the regulatory burden and contributes to increased economic growth.

*Honey is a non-potentially hazardous food. Honey never spoils. There is little or no health risk associated with honey.

*HB 2158 will boost economic opportunity for small farmers and rural community businesses by providing sales opportunities and provide community members with pure, local, raw honey, a food of superior quality and health benefit compared to processed sugars.

* This policy is closely aligned with neighboring states. Adopting this for Kansas will help our Kansas beekeepers compete in areas along our state lines.

The Kansas Honey Producers represents all beekeepers in Kansas from novice to commercial. The vast majority of Kansas beekeepers maintain 5 or fewer hives and are not counted in the reported 6,000 hives said to be managed in Kansas. By allowing these very small producers to have a viable outlet for their product, you will encourage additional people to consider beekeeping. Although the honey is the concern of this bill, the value of it is dwarfed by the value of the pollination services provided by honey bees. The pollination value is reported in the millions of dollars and that does not include the pollination done in home gardens and for wildlife! Promoting and supporting small beekeepers will have an exponential effect on the availability of pollinators.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I'd welcome the opportunity to discuss this further and answer any questions you might have.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Tipton

Kansas Honey Producers, President

Master Beekeeper