

January 24th, 2012

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

I'm grateful for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Kansas Farriers Association.

Farriers, along with veterinarians, have a hands-on relationship with equine owners and their animals. We know all too well how great the need is to educate horse owners, especially first time owners for the sake of the horses but also for the safety of the owners, vets and farriers handling them.

We dedicate ourselves to the well-being of horses. However, that goes hand-in-hand with educating owners. Our members work with vet students at KSU in the Podiatry program. We attend EquiFest of Kansas in Wichita every year; it's the largest equine expo in the region, and we go there to put on educational clinics and lectures to help folks learn the basics of hoof care and maintenance. We appear at symposiums and clinics to work for a better informed community of horse owners.

I'm proud of the time and money dedicated by Kansas farriers to share their knowledge. But, we aren't compensated for these activities so it means missing work and a paycheck. Because of this, we are limited on just how much time and money we can personally afford to give up. This bill would provide funding to educate more equine owners which in turn provides a better life for horses and a more vital industry for our state.

The establishment of a Kansas Equine Education and Promotion Board, self funded by the state's horse owners through their purchasing of commercial horse feed, will make a huge difference for our state. I understand grants can be awarded for many important and valuable projects but I know personally how great the need is for education.

Therefore, as the president of the Kansas Farriers Association I hope you will support House Bill #2449.

Thank you. Are there any questions?

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