

February 13, 2020
Senate Bill 308

Agriculture & Natural Resource Committee Members,

I am here today because the two bills you are deliberating on this week could change the way my family currently buys and consumes dairy as a critical part of our diet. Senate Bill 300 and Senate Bill 308 could greatly affect my health and the health of my growing family here in the great state of Kansas, as well as encroach on the freedom we currently enjoy of purchasing our raw dairy from a friendly, local farm.

We currently buy all our dairy products- butter, yogurt, Kiefer, milk, cheese, cream, etc. from a small, local, 100% family operated Kansas farm. We know the farm, we know the farmers, we know the animals our dairy comes from. They are extremely transparent in their farming and processing practices and we can see with our own eyes that their farm is as clean and ethical as it gets. We love having an open, transparent relationship with our farmers. We love that our food is local and we personally know the farm family and farming practices we are supporting with our dollars. And most importantly, we love that the fresh, local, raw dairy we currently buy and consume from this local farm provides nutrients to our family in a way that industrialized, processed dairy cannot do. You can see the difference, you can taste the difference, you can feel the difference.

I won't go too much into the nutrition side of how these bills would impact the health of my family and so many others, because I believe the personal freedoms at stake here are even more important- but I would like to lend a tiny bit of insight in case you don't have any background on raw dairy. I choose raw dairy over conventional dairy for myself and my family because of the vastly different nutrition profile. Raw, grassfed dairy contains all the naturally-occurring vitamins, minerals and enzymes. This includes the beneficial bacteria (probiotics). Conventional, pasteurized dairy kills the bacteria, and in addition alters the amino acids lysine & tryosine (making the available protein less available), destroys vitamins (decreasing vitamin C by 50%, vit B12 by almost 100% and decreases the minerals calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, and potassium. Something else the pasteurization process does is related to the reason many people think they cannot tolerate or consume dairy. It alters the enzyme lactose, interfering with digestion. This puts extra stress on the pancreas to produce digestive enzymes and because of this, pasteurized dairy has shown links to diabetes. These are just a few quick reasons I choose raw dairy for myself, and my growing children. The safety of raw dairy depends on the health of the animal and the cleanliness of the farm. If you know your farm and farmer, as I do, raw dairy can be the among the healthiest possible foods for growing children and aging women.

If either of these bills were to pass, it would negatively impact my food choices as an American, as well as cripple a small Kansas family business that I passionately believe in. Small family farms are what Kansas was built on and is known for. Why would we do more to jeopardize what little number of small, family farms are still out there? Not to mention, hurt the local economy.

It would also confuse and disappoint my small children that they could no longer enjoy their favorite healthy foods. Their strong gut bacteria and their healthy immune systems would suffer if we had to call our beloved raw butter buttons and Kiefer pops a treat of the past.

I can personally attest to never experiencing any negative effects from consuming raw dairy, nor do I know anyone who has. I cannot think of a reason that restricting the commodity of local, healthy, nutrient dense food would be beneficial for anyone. I feel Americans should continue to enjoy the right to choose to buy their food from the neighboring farm down the road as we've always done.

Thank you so much for your time,

Molly Martin, RN and mother
Assaria, Kansas