

The Senate Agriculture, Veterans and Gaming Committee met on Wednesday, March 29, 2006 at 3:00 p.m. in Room 112, Capitol. The following members were present:

Vickerman, Chair
Skoe, Vice Chair
Day
Dille
Hann
Koering
Lourey
Murphy
Nienow
Rest
Sams
Wergin

Senator Vickerman called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m. He called on Senator Murphy for S.F. 3345, a bill relating to nursery stock toxicity consumer education. Senator Murphy moved on Page 1, delete lines 6 to 13. AMENDMENT PASSED.

Bob Marg, Altura, MN, testified in support and stated he had a cow that died because it had eaten Japanese yew. He stated with need to get information out about poisonous plants by labeling or public service messages.

Geir Friisoe, Manager, Agriculture Chemical and Plant Pest Section, MN Dept. of Agriculture. He stated a lot of plants are poisonous and it's difficult administratively for them to make the cutoff of what plants are labeled and which ones aren't.

Senator Murphy moved that S.F. 3345, as amended, be recommended to pass. BILL PASSED.

Senator Vickerman called on Senator Senjem for S.F. 33506, a bill relating to a farm enhancement loan program. He stated the dairy industry is responsible for 54,000 jobs in Minnesota. Also, 73,000 dairy cows have been lost in Minnesota.

Ronald and Keith Belibewrek, Hayfield, MN. Keith testified that he and his brother are taking over their family farm. They have a 10-year time frame in which to work. The current facility – parts of it are 30 years old – so they want to rebuild a lot of it and have a facility for 200 cows. Their problem is money and stated this bill would help them a lot.

Tom Peterson, MN Farm Bureau, stated this bill would help younger producers. He stated there is new interest in compost farms.

Bob LeFebvre, MN Milk Producers. He stated this would enhance the growth of the dairy industry and would give people access to affordable capital.

Senator Hann asked why the interest rate isn't specified in the bill.

Jim Boerboom, Ass't. Com., MN Dept of Ag. He stated they look at the prevailing interest at the time someone wants to pay their money back. Money is appropriated to the commissioner for the farm enhancement loan program.

Senator Koering moved S.F. 3506 be passed and sent to Finance. BILL PASSED.

Senator McGinn presented S.F. 3546, a bill allowing active duty military personnel to enter state parks free of charge.

Senator Wergin asked how this was going to work.

Senator McGinn stated it's only for active military people, home on leave to Minnesota. They will need to have their current military orders displayed in the windshield and have on their person – a current military identification card.

Senator Skoe moved S.F. 3546 be passed. BILL PASSED.

Senator Vickerman presented S.F. 3314, a bill to create a soy-based transformer fluid conversion allowance program. Senator Vickerman moved amendment SCS3314A-1. AMENDMENT PASSED.

Tom Johnson, Cooper Power Systems, stated they are a leading manufacturer of electrical distribution equipment, located in Woodbury, Minnesota. Envirotemp fluid is developed by blending seed oils, including soybean oil, with food-grade performance enhancing additives, resulting in an environmentally preferred, readily bio-degradeable product. He stated it has a very high fire point of 360degrees C and is an increased margin of fire safety. Utilities and rural electrical cooperatives are considering using this fluid.

Jerry Schoenfeld, MN Soybean Growers Association, stated they support the bill and Minnesota now has three plants for biodiesel.

Jake Hamlin, Cargill, Inc., stated Cargill manufactures Envirotemp fluid for Cooper.

Senator Hann questioned why the owners, board of directors, invest their own money in this product instead of the state of Minnesota.

Mr. Hamlin stated this is a voluntary, promotional concept.

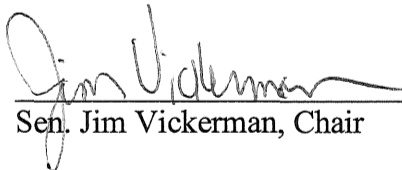
Senator Hann stated he wants projections of what the company intends to sell – projections of sale of the product.

Senator Skoe suggested they provide the information to the committee staff and they will forward it to members.

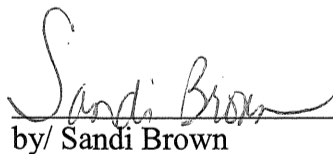
Senator Vickerman moved S.F. 3314, as amended, be passed and sent to Finance. BILL PASSED.

Meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

This meeting was taped.



Sen. Jim Vickerman, Chair



by/ Sandi Brown

Senate Agriculture, Veterans and Gaming Committee

Wednesday, March 29, 2006

3:00 p.m.

Room 112, Capitol

AGENDA

S.F. 3345-Murphy: Nursery stock toxicity consumer education. *Amended, Passed*

Bob Marg, Altura, Minnesota

S.F. 3506-Senjem: Farm enhancement loan program. *Passed, re-referred to Finance*

S.F. 3546-McGinn: Military personel to enter state parks without a fee. *Passed*

S.F. 3314-Vickerman: Soy-based transformer fluid conversion allowance program and appropriation. *Amended, Passed-re-ref. to Finance*

Tom Johnson, Cooperative Power Systems

Jerry Schoenfeld, MN Soybean Growers