

INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Minutes of the 5th Meeting of the 2025 Interim

October 16, 2025

Call to Order and Roll Call

The fifth meeting of the Interim Joint Committee on Agriculture was held on October 16, 2025, at 9:00 AM in Room 154 of the Capitol Annex. Representative Myron Dossett, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Representative Myron Dossett, Co-Chair; Senators Matthew Deneen, Shelley Funke Frommeyer, Matt Nunn, Aaron Reed, Robin L. Webb, and Mike Wilson; and Representatives Chad Aull, Ryan Bivens, Anne Gay Donworth, Daniel Fister, Chris Freeland, David Hale, Mark Hart, Kim King, Matthew Koch, Candy Massaroni, Adam Moore, Michael Sarge Pollock, Felicia Rabourn, Sarah Stalker, Walker Thomas, James Tipton, and Joshua Watkins.

Guests: Stephanie Barnett, Kentucky Tennessee Livestock Market (KTLM); Kyle Kelly, Director, Public Affairs, Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB); Representative Nima Kulkarni; Sahara Peterson, 4-H participant; and Cheyenne Peterson, 4-H participant.

LRC Staff: Stefan Kasacavage, Hillary Abbott, Kelly Ludwig, and Susan Spoonamore.

Approval of September 18, 2025, minutes

The September 18, 2025, minutes were approved by voice vote, without objection upon motion of Representative Donworth and seconded by Senator Deneen.

Discussion on the Condemnation of Agricultural Operations

Kyle Kelly, Director, Public Affairs, KFB, stated condemnation of agricultural property is an issue that affects members of KFB. Stephanie Barnett, KTLM, discussed the condemnation of their agriculture operation in Guthrie, Kentucky, which has been ongoing for the past three years. She stated communication from the state regarding condemnation of their property has been non-existent, and the state refused to negotiate plans for the new entrance to the property. Ms. Barnett said they requested their property be reasonably restored to the condition prior to the condemnation.

Chair Dossett said he was gathering information from all interested landowners concerning property protection and the fair treatment and compensation of landowners.

Representative Koch said "eminent domain" is a dirty term, and the government needs to do better with public awareness and proper communication. When a property is assessed, there needs to be better fair market values. Landowners are also required to pay taxes on land they did not want to sell.

In response to Senator Frommeyer, Ms. Barnett said they provided estimates for costs relating to water drainage, loading shoots, relocating the water well, moving electrical lines, and several other costs that would impact their business. They have tried to negotiate for the last two years on the placement of a turning lane and entrance. Landowners often find the process frustrating and expensive. Mr. Kelly said any condemning entity should stay in touch with the landowners.

In response to Representative Aull, Ms. Barnett said she would confer with her lawyer before sharing the names of the individuals who have worked on this issue.

In response to Representative Tipton, Ms. Barnett said the law firm from Lexington was contracted by state government.

Representative Donworth stated her family property was subjected to eminent domain and it impacted their ability to farm several acres. She said using the fair market value of the property may not be the best way to compensate landowners.

In response to Representative Bivens, Ms. Barnett said the state took approximately three fourths of an acre. Representative Bivens recommended officials from the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) handling condemnation lawsuits, testify before the committee to explain their actions.

Senator Webb stated another issue is the lack of maintenance of condemned land by KYTC.

Discussion on the Kentucky Urban Youth Agriculture Initiative

Representative Nima Kulkarni explained proposed legislation relating to the Kentucky Urban Youth Agriculture Initiative within the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service. The legislation would authorize the extension service to operate a one year youth agriculture program in counties with 150,000 or more residents; and would promote education in farming, agriculture, agribusiness, and the efficient use of land in urban counties.

Cheyenne Peterson and Sahara Peterson, 4-H participants, explained that 4-H has allowed them to participate in a variety of programs and clubs such as leadership, art, agricultural safety, livestock shows, horse shows, sheep, and gardening. The programs help to increase a young person's awareness of the impact that agriculture has on daily life. Cheyenne

Peterson stated they own a traveling petting zoo, which allows them to promote agriculture.

In response to Representative Donworth, Representative Kulkarni said the one year program length was recommended in order for youth to get the full experience, but is open to suggestions.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.