

HB 1411 -- AGRICULTURAL OUTREACH PROGRAM

SPONSOR: Collins

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Agriculture Policy by a vote of 16 to 0.

This bill requires the Department of Agriculture to establish an outreach program for historically unserved, underserved, or inappropriately served communities. The program must provide financial assistance, encourage activities to support and promote urban agriculture, provided educational and skills training related to food production, address food deserts, recommend improvements and services to address concerns in these communities.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that residents in socially disadvantaged communities lack access to healthy, fresh food options. This lack of access leads to undesirable health and social outcomes. This bill would require the Department to work with residents in these communities to help find ways to provide access to fresh, healthy food options through training and financial assistance.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Collins; Sarah J. Eber, Lincoln University Cooperative Extension; Dorrell "Malik" Sims; Karen Greer, Angels Within CDS, LLC; Tasha Phonix, Elevating Voices of Leaders vying For Equity; and Dr. Melissa Nash, St. Louis Public Schools.

OPPOSERS: Written testimony was submitted in opposition to the bill.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill discussed several programs the Department has to help promote urban agriculture and to connect people with healthy, fresh food options.

Testifying on the bill were Emily Leroy, Missouri Department of Agriculture; and Davin Althoff, Missouri Department of Agriculture.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.