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Testimony of Nathan Kroh
Dairy Coordinator
House Bill 1515
House Agriculture Committee
Room 327C
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Chairman Thomas and members of the House Agriculture, I am Nathan Kroh, the Dairy Coordinator, here on behalf of Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring. I am here to provide testimony in opposition of the House Bill 1515, relating to the sale of raw milk directly to the consumer.

Dairy farms already have access to distribute raw milk through the animal share agreement provision. Under that provision, the agriculture commissioner has no authority to regulate animal share agreements. This bill would require the commissioner to establish rules to protect the health and safety of the public, regulations for facilities, labeling, production, pathogen testing. This process is expensive and still will not guarantee the raw milk is safe, nor will it create much more opportunity that doesn't already exist. Dairies will continue to distribute raw milk through the animal share agreements provisions.

A Grade A farm permit requires inspections, monthly milk testing, and every single load of milk is screened for antibiotics. Screening equipment requires training and licensing by a Laboratory Evaluation Officer, to be considered official.

Current dairy regulation statute adopts the Grade A standards from the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO), which explicitly require bottle milk to be pasteurized, so raw milk cannot be bottled and sold under the provisions of the PMO, which conflicts with HB 1515.

No matter how diligent the most careful producers are, raw milk is commonly contaminated by the pathogenic bacteria on the animal's skin and teats, dust and debris in the air, and biofilms develop on milking equipment, even high-quality stainless steel. The Grade A requirements do not and will never guarantee that the milk is safe to consume in absence of pasteurization.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 1515. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.