

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 47th Legislature (1999)

HOUSE

RESOLUTION NO. 1026____

By: Beutler, Turner, Pope
(Clay) and Eddins

AS INTRODUCED

A Resolution expressing intent that certain agricultural education courses be utilized as core curriculum course requirements for high school graduation; expressing concern that agricultural education courses are not accepted for high school graduation and college admission requirements; and directing distribution.

WHEREAS, the vocational agriculture program, currently known as agricultural education, in public schools was established in 1917 through the Smith-Hughes Act with the primary objective of training young people for occupations in production agriculture; and

WHEREAS, over the years, the vocational agriculture program and the Future Farmers of America organization has changed to meet the need of students, including the development of a uniform curriculum; and

WHEREAS, in the United States approximately 20% of the workforce is employed in agriculture and agriculture-related occupations; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Agriculture projects that there are approximately 48,000 job openings each year for college graduates in agriculture; and

WHEREAS, because of the changing needs of the state, agricultural education is broadening its perspective and now provides students with the skills needed to enter and advance in the new fields of agriculture and agriculture-related careers; and

WHEREAS, agricultural education teachers who have graduated from an Oklahoma university with an agricultural education degree in most

cases have met all of the course requirements to be eligible to be certified in areas of science, economics and communications; and

WHEREAS, many agricultural education courses, including horticulture, animal science, plant and soil science, bio-technology in agriculture, principles of agriculture technology, natural resources, food sciences, agriculture economics, and agriculture communications, contain sets of academic competencies that are equal to traditional academic courses; and

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education has adopted emergency rules establishing high school graduation requirements which will require students to have completed a core curriculum of specific courses which includes four units of English, three units of mathematics, three units of social studies, three units of science, and two units of arts before graduation, of which, agricultural education courses will not be counted toward the core curriculum requirement; and

WHEREAS, agricultural education courses and the training and opportunities that students receive from those courses will be greatly diminished by the implementation of rules by the State Board of Education which establish course specific graduation requirements without the flexibility to adjust for individual student needs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE 1ST SESSION OF THE 47TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

THAT the Oklahoma House of Representatives hereby declares its intent that local school districts be given the flexibility to utilize vocational education courses, specifically agricultural education courses, that offer sets of competencies integrated within the curriculum that provide the teaching and learning of skills and knowledge in the appropriate science, mathematics and communications Priority Academic Student Skills as courses that will qualify as science and mathematics core curriculum unit requirements as

established in the rules adopted by the State Board of Education for graduation.

THAT the Oklahoma House of Representatives expresses its concern that both the State Board of Education and the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education have not allowed for the flexibility of accepting agricultural education courses as qualifying courses for high school graduation requirements and for college admission requirements and strongly directs that such consideration be given in the future.

THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed to the State Board of Education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, and the State Board of Vocational and Technical Education.

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