



NEWS RELEASE

LOUISIANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Bill to boost cottage industry: home-cooked treats

BATON ROUGE – Currently, enterprising bakers and cooks face a daunting list of sanitary codes and regulations to try to start their own home-based business, so one legislator would like to ease that burden.

Representative Scott Simon – R, Abita Springs, is chairman of the House Committee on Health and Welfare and past chairman of the Sustainable Local Food Policy Council. He has introduced HB 775 to allow up-and-coming, home-based bakers, cooks and confectioners to prepare a wider variety of food items at a greater quantity without facing the same daunting sanitary and food preparation regulations of a retail restaurant.

“We have made past exceptions to food preparation rules to allow citizens to make a short list of specific treats: mainly homemade jams, jellies, honey, cookies and cakes,” said Simon, “But to really kick start a home-based economy, we need to make it easier for budding chefs and bakers to bring more items to local markets without the burden of stifling food preparation codes.”

Simon’s bill strikes the short list of allowed specific food items to replace them with the phrase, “Foods made at home for sale whose gross annual sales equal fifty thousand dollars or less.” He calls this the “cottage foods exemption,” meaning exempt from a long list of detailed food-handling regulations, including Department of Health inspections. His bill also increases how much a home-cook can sell. Current law allows only \$20,000 of sales of the listed items.

“North Carolina has a great program to encourage home-based food entrepreneurship, and citizens there love it, so my bill provides for a program identical to that one,” Simon said.

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