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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Senator Kolkhorst Bolsters Food Freedom Movement

AUSTIN - Working with small food producers, Senator Lois W. Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) has filed SB 572, to expand the types of foods that can be sold from home kitchens in Texas. In a widely unpopular decision in 2014, the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) narrowly determined that the statutory meaning of the word "pickles" only meant "pickled cucumbers." Many small farmers found the rule burdensome to their family businesses, which often pickle different vegetables beyond cucumbers. If passed, SB 572 expands the meaning of home pickling in state law to include other vegetables. The legislation also directs DSHS to determine the competitiveness of Texas' cottage food laws.

"Kitchens across Texas have spoken and we have listened," Kolkhorst said. "This is an example of people from all over the state coming together to make our government more friendly and useful for everyone who loves local foods."

Kolkhorst is a longtime supporter of the local food movement and was as a founding member of the Farm-to-Table Caucus with Rep. Eddie Rodriguez (D-Austin). In 2011, the Texas Legislature passed SB 81, authored by Senator Jane Nelson (R-Flower Mound) and sponsored by then Representative Kolkhorst, which authorized the legal sale of home baked and produced foods in Texas. The legislation helped many Texans start their own baking and cottage foods businesses.

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