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Stop the bickering and build the bio lab

Concerns are growing about whether Kansas will become home to the nation's \$600 million-plus biodefense lab promised.

To summarize what's happened so far: Homeland Security determined last year that Kansas State University is the best site for a new lab to study dangerous animal diseases. That was followed by whining from some local groups that also wanted the facility. They recently claimed building in Kansas would practically be begging for trouble and that it would bring hoof and mouth disease willy-nilly around the prairie.

The loudest objections come from Texas — which is also known for tornadoes, but where, apparently, people would use their big cowboy hats to contain storm damage.

The U.S. Senate has approved \$36 million to begin construction of the biodefense lab. But in the House, it's still emerging. Congress will get together in coming weeks to decide whether to approve the funding.

It should. A state-of-the-art facility is needed for national security, and Kansas has earned the right to call for a "building within a building, with submarine lock doors" that can withstand tornadoes.

Of course, tornadoes are a fear-factor sideshow in the political struggle over the economic boom this year. The House squabbling represents the worst Congress has to offer, a tug-of-war that threatens real progress in fighting animal diseases.

The process for selecting the site was fair, and the result should be recognized. Instead of more howls, the state should see that this facility actually gets built in Kansas.