

**To:** Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Senator Powell, Chairman

**From:** John Cowley on behalf of Kansas Farm Bureau

**Date:** February 5, 2015

**Re:** **SB 118** – powers and duties of KDA Division of Conservation

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Chairman Powell and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 118. My name is John Cowley, and I am testifying today on behalf of Kansas Farm Bureau (KFB). KFB is the state's largest general farm organization representing more than 40,000 farm and ranch families through our 105 county Farm Bureau Associations.

Oppressive federal regulations and excessive mitigation costs have nearly stymied the construction of flood retarding dams in Kansas, putting farmers and ranchers at risk of losing life or property and restricting water supplies for livestock and crops.

SB 118 would allow the Kansas Department of Agriculture's Division of Conservation to offer affordable solutions to these problems so that Section 404 permits of the Clean Water Act could be issued and projects completed. Without SB 118, the risks of flooding, sediment accumulating in our public reservoirs and the loss of valuable water supply will remain high while shovel-ready projects sit idle.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today and I'd be glad to answer any questions at the appropriate time.