

To: Senate Natural Resources Committee, Senator Powell, Chairman

From: Kent Askren, Kansas Farm Bureau

Date: February 18, 2015

Re: **SB 227** - an act concerning water; related to local enhanced management areas

Chairman Powell and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 227. I am Kent Askren Public Policy Director for Kansas Farm Bureau.

KFB policy supports strong conservation efforts and methods to extend the life of limited water resources. When water shortages occur, water rights should be administered based upon strict adherence to priority. When this is not practical, stakeholder driven management plans with goals mindful of local economies that do not disadvantage senior water rights should be implemented.

SB 227 grants the chief engineer authority to give “due consideration” to past water management and conservation when implementing Local Enhanced Management Areas (LEMA), Intensive Groundwater Use Control Areas (IGUCA) or other “similar program” corrective controls.

Existing authority governing LEMAs and IGUCAs are found within the Groundwater Management District (GMD) Act. K.S.A. 82a-1020 clearly states it is the policy of the GMD Act to “preserve basic water use doctrine” which is 1st in time is 1st in right (K.S.A. 82a-707(c)).

SB 227 gives the chief engineer authority to take into account water management and conservation when implementing limitations without violating the laws of beneficial water use in accordance with the rights of priority of appropriation.

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