

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

From: Kent Askren, Kansas Farm Bureau

Date: January 27, 2016

Re: Testimony SB 337- An act concerning water; relating to the water appropriation act; annual water use report

Chairman Powell and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of SB 337. 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.

Kansas Farm Bureau policy supports the protection, development and administration of water rights consistent with their priority. Water use reporting is fundamental to accomplishing these tasks.

When the penalty for failure to submit the annual water use report provides insufficient incentive that penalty should be evaluated. SB 337 proposes to increase penalties from \$250 to \$1,000 for each water right that the owner fails to report water usage for the previous year in a timely manner. If this penalty does not result in the filing of a water use report a suspension of the water right could ultimately be ordered and enforced until the report is submitted.

Fortunately, a very small percentage of Kansas water right holders fail to submit a timely annual water use report, therefore this enhanced penalty will likely impact a relatively small number of water right holders and potentially none at all.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony and we encourage you to vote favorably on SB 337.