



Water District No. 1 of Johnson County

**To: Chair, Senator Olson
Members of the Senate Committee on Utilities**

**From: Darci Meese, Government Affairs Coordinator
WaterOne (Water District No. 1 Johnson County)**

Date: February 15th, 2016

RE: Proponent Testimony: Senate Bill 412

On behalf of Water District No. of Johnson County, I am here today to support the passage of Senate Bill 412 which would modify an easement previously granted to the utility for the installation of water diversion structures on the Kansas River. WaterOne is the public water supply system for approximately 405,000 citizens of Johnson County, Kansas. About half of the water distributed in the County comes from the Kansas River. For many years, WaterOne relied upon a rock jetty structure across the river to divert the flow to our intake facility on the south bank of the river. Continued degradation of the river bed diminished the integrity of the rock structure and ultimately resulted in its complete failure. It was determined that a permanent concrete cellular structure was the most cost effective solution to replacing the rock jetty. Although it was not required for the original structure, the approval process for the permanent structure in the river bed required WaterOne to obtain an easement from the State for its location. As such, WaterOne approached the Legislature in 2006 to obtain the existing easement found in K.S.A. 19-3521b which is limited to the installation of water diversion structures.

The concrete weir was completed in 2007 and today successfully operates to divert water to the intake. The weir actually has slowed the river bed degradation effect upstream, but below the weir the condition still exist, creating a natural hydraulic drop on the downstream side. Several years ago, WaterOne began to discuss the possibility of capturing that energy through the use of a small hydropower facility to provide some redundancy to our nearby facilities. In 2015, WaterOne hired a consultant to conduct a pre-feasibility study on the project and determined that such a facility could provide about one megawatt of power which would be sufficient to operate the presedimentation facility that sits about 400 feet from the location of the weir. The payback on the project appears to be favorable and provides a redundant power source that WaterOne values. At this time a preliminary Federal Energy Regulatory Commission permit has been requested that will provide our application priority while we continue to collect necessary data to scope the project. WaterOne has shared the plans for the project with many stakeholders in the area including the Friends of the Kaw and the Kansas Water Office. All feedback to date has been favorable.

Senate Bill 412 will broaden the current easement language contained in K.S.A. 19-3521b to allow for the placement of hydropower equipment on the existing concrete weir structure, near the intake. We believe this small amendment to the statute will facilitate a positive use of available natural resources. We respectfully request the Committee's support of Senate Bill 412.

**Darci Meese
Government Affairs Coordinator
WaterOne**

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