

Approved

*Thomas F. Walker*  
Date 2/17/87

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

The meeting was called to order by Representative Thomas F. Walker at  
Chairperson

9:00 a.m./p.m. on January 27, 1987 in room 522-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Peterson

Committee staff present:

Avis Swartzman - Revisor  
Carolyn Rampey - Legislative Research Dept.  
Julian Efird - Legislative Research Dept.  
Mary Galligan - Legislative Research Dept.  
Jackie Breymeyer - Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Joe Harkins, Director - Kansas Water Office

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Walker. He introduced Joe Harkins, Director, Kansas Water Office, who was present to continue his presentation.

Mr. Harkins answered several questions before he continued with his presentation dealing with the geological formation of the land and water flow, supply and demand for water, flooding, and the litigation in progress involving the State of Colorado.

Mr. Harkins continued with the Fish and Game Commission, stating that not only does this agency have responsibility for hunting and fishing, but also has a vital interest in the quality of water for the maintenance of its fisheries.

The Park and Resources Authority is interested in water quality and quantity for its recreational purposes.

The Kansas Corporation Commission is usually thought of in terms of utility rates, but has for years assumed the great responsibility for the regulation of the oil and gas industry as it relates to groundwater. Mr. Harkins said it makes no difference how much water there is if it is polluted - because it is no good. Industrialization, herbicides, and oil are all risks because the more that is done in these areas, the more pollution is risked. Irreparable harm can be done economically and environmentally if there is not adequate oversight.

The Adjutant General office is the response agency which mobilizes in times of disasters such as floods. This agency has the best communication system for monitoring any type of emergency and plays its role of assistance anywhere it is needed.

The Department of Health & Environment has a myriad of responsibilities with regard to water quality. It must protect the water, as well as control the quantity of it. Mr. Harkins said there are small quantities of chemical compounds in the water and we do not know how much it takes to cause disease in man. Therefore, it is better to err on the side of caution for protection. This causes industry many problems. Technology may prove we weren't doing enough or we were using overkill methods. Clean water is the major source of life expectancy in the world.

Several committee members had questions dealing with water problems. Mr. Harkins commented that many of these problems were related in that when legislation was passed to help the water-related agencies, no manpower was authorized with enforcement capability. He mentioned there are over three million acres of land under irrigation in the state.

Most of these agencies are independent of the executive branch of the government, but the Adjutant General's office, Health & Environment and Water Office report to the governor.

As there was no time to discuss the Water Office and Authority in the full committee, Mr. Harkins will continue his review in the subcommittee reviewing these agencies.

Representative Sebelius moved the minutes of the previous meeting be approved.  
Representative Love gave a second to the motion. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned.

