

Approved

Thomas F. Walker
Date

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. ~~xxx~~ on MONDAY, MARCH 27, 1989 in room 522-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative McClure

Committee staff present:

Avis Swartzman - Revisor
Julian Efird - Legislative Research
Carolyn Rampey - Legislative Research
Jackie Breymeyer - Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Representative Nancy Brown
Joe Harkins - Director, Kansas Water Office
David Pope - Division of Water Resources
Joyce Wolf - Kansas Audobon Council
Charlene Stinnard - Kansas Natural Resource Council

The meeting of the House Governmental Organization Committee was called to order by Representative Thomas F. Walker, Chairman. He stated the minutes would stand approved at the end of the meeting if there were no corrections or additions.

Subcommittee Report on SB 71

Representative Brown read through the report and stated the recommendations to the committee. (Attachment 1) It was recommended to extend the Department of Revenue and Secretary for 6 years. The Department will report to the Legislature on several of its divisions, as well as the Business Tax Information System (BTIMS) and Automated Collections System (ACS). The subcommittee feels that additional oversight is needed regarding the state's use of computers, telecommunications and information technologies. The subcommittee also wants a bill drafted to place the Department of Administration under the provisions of the Kansas Sunset law. Another bill the subcommittee would like to see introduced would establish a new Joint Committee on Governmental Technology to monitor the state's computers, telecommunications, and information technologies. The fourth recommendation would be to submit to the Legislative Coordinating Council a request for a Special Interim Committee to be appointed for the purpose of reviewing the Division of Information Systems and Communications during the 1989 interim.

Representative Brown moved the adoption of the Revenue Subcommittee report. Representative Graeber gave a second to the motion. The motion carried.

Representative Graeber moved to amend SB 71 from 8 years to 6. Representative Weimer gave a second to the motion. The motion carried.

Representative Weimer moved to introduce legislation that would place the Department of Administration under the provisions of the Kansas Sunset law. Representative Graeber gave a second to the motion.

Discussion began on if the bill needed a date; if the legislation could be introduced at this late date.

Representative Weimer withdrew his motion and Representative Graeber his second.

Representative Ramirez moved to establish a new Joint Committee on Governmental Technology. Representative Graeber gave a second to the motion. The motion carried.

Representative Gjerstad moved to direct the Chairman to write a letter to the LCC requesting a Special Interim Committee be appointed for the purpose of reviewing the Division of Information Systems and Communications during the 1989 interim. Representative Miller gave a second to the motion. The motion carried.

Representative Brown moved to introduce legislation to place the Department of Administration under the provisions of the Kansas Sunset Act to start in 1991. Representative Weimer gave a second to the motion. The motion carried.

Representative Graeber moved to pass SB 71 favorably as amended. Representative

Gjerstad seconded the Unless specifically noted, the individual remarks recorded herein have not been transcribed verbatim. Individual remarks as reported herein have not been submitted to the individuals appearing before the committee for editing or corrections. motion; the motion carried.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION,
room 522-S Statehouse, at 9:00 a.m./~~p.m.~~^{XX} on MONDAY, MARCH 27, 1989

The Committee turned to HB 2546 - relating to water use

Joe Harkins, Director, Kansas Water Office, was first to address the bill. He stated that we are in the second year of a drought and it is essential to conserve water in the most efficient way possible. There are many examples of the right things being done, but unfortunately there are some wrong things being done also. There is no reason to waste water during times of shortage. Conservation is not the cure - it is only a means of preventing shortages. Conservation should be practiced in times of plenty. He used the example of building codes to encourage efficient plumbing fixtures. The right to use water carries with it a responsibility to use it wisely. Mr. Harkins urged the committee's favorable consideration of the bill. (Attachment 2)

David Pope, Division of Water Resources, addressed the bill next. He briefly reviewed the existing state law concerning water conservation plans. Currently there is no express statutory authority requiring or authorizing anyone to require conservation plans on water users with existing water right who are not in assurance districts or who do not apply for a new permit, change to an existing water right, water transfer, or a purchase of water from the Kansas Water Office. HB 2546 would fill that void and implement the original recommendations of the Kansas Water Authority in the 1985 State Water Plan. (Attachment 3)

Joyce Wolf, Kdansas Audubon Council spoke in support of the bill. She represents 5,000 Kansas National Audubon Society members. She said this organization supports the bill because of its strong commitment to the wise use of our natural resources. (Attachment 4)

Charlene Stinnard, Kansas Natural Resource Council, spoke in support of HB 2546. She stated in her testimony (Attachment 5) that this bill will allow the chief engineer at the State Board of Agriculture to require water rights to holders to create and be prepared to implement water conservation plans. Drought conditions heighten the need for water use planning.

The Chairman declared the hearing closed on HB 2546.

Representative Reinert made a conceptual motion to take care of a small technical amendment. Representative Sughrue gave a second to the motion. The motion carried.

Representative Bowden moved to pass HB 2546 favorably as amended. Representative Sughrue gave a second to the motion. The motion carried.

The Committee turned to SB 256 - agricultural employment relations

Representative Brown moved to amend SB 256 by renumbering subsections on page 10. Representative Weimer gave a second to the motion. The motion carried.

Representative Gjerstad moved to pass SB 256 favorably as amended. Representative Weimer gave a second to the motion. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned.

March 27, 1989

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Sunset Review for the Department of Revenue and Office of Secretary of Revenue

The Kansas Sunset Law provides for the abolition of the Office of Secretary and the Department of Revenue on July 1, 1989, unless continued in existence by an act of the Legislature. S.B. 71 would continue both entities in existence for eight years. If the bill does not pass during the 1989 Session to continue these entities, both would enter a statutorily authorized one-year phaseout period before ceasing to exist on June 30, 1990.

1983 Sunset Review

The Department of Revenue was scheduled for its first sunset review when the Sunset Law was reestablished by the 1981 Legislature. The Department and Office of Secretary were scheduled for abolition on July 1, 1983. The first sunset review took place during the 1983 Legislature.

Several recommendations which were made during the 1983 sunset review either were enacted through legislation or were implemented by the agency with financing approved by the Legislature: elimination by S.B. 309 of licensing vehicle salesmen (licensure was reestablished in S.B. 618 by the 1984 Legislature); endorsement of the Vehicle Information Processing System (VIPS) with funding provided in H.B. 2086; establishment in 1985 S.B. 340 (first introduced as 1983 H.B. 2562) of three classified attorney positions; and recommendation of three additional positions for the Internal Audit unit with funding provided in H.B. 2086.

The 1983 Legislature enacted S.B. 43 which reestablished the Department of Revenue until July 1, 1987, at which time the agency was subject of another sunset review. The four year extension, rather than an eight year maximum extension allowed by the Sunset Law, was recommended because of several legislative concerns about the collection of taxes and monies owed to the state. Many of the proposed solutions to problems identified by a performance audit report concerning the tax collection system were supposed to be solved with implementation of Kansas Business Integrated Tax System (K-BITS), a proposed computer software program to be jointly development by the Department's technical staff and various paid consultants from national accounting firms.

1987 Sunset Review

The 1987 Legislature enacted H.B. 2060 which extended the Department of Revenue for two years. The House Committee on Governmental Organization concluded that there were ongoing and unresolved issues and concerns relating to data processing and the collection of taxes. Therefore, only a two-year extension was recommended.

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The House Committee felt that additional legislative oversight and review was necessary in light of several developments, including Post Audit recommendations relative to K-BITS which had not met its developmental or implementation schedule; a proposed departmental reorganization to establish a new Division of Collections; and implementation of several other new computer systems--the Vehicle Information Processing System (VIPS) for titling, registering and licensing of motor vehicles and the Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA) project for statewide reappraisal.

The Secretary of Revenue using statutory authority reorganized the Department in Fall 1987 and established a Division of Collections. The Governor's FY 1989 budget recommendations included funding for the new division in the Governor's Budget Report and the 1988 Legislature concurred with funding a Division of Collections.

1989 Sunset Review

The Subcommittee has reviewed S.B. 273 which unclassifies two positions within the Department of Revenue and also establishes the Division of Collections as a statutory entity headed by the Director of Collections. Currently, the Division of Collections is headed by a classified Director of Administrative Services. A second classified position, also titled the Director of Administrative Services, headed the Division of Operations. The current Secretary has redesignated that organizational entity as the Office of Operations since it was not statutorily established and that classified Director of Administrative Services now coordinates the Office under the supervision of the Special Assistant to the Secretary. The classified Manager of Revenue Analysis heads the Planning and Research Bureau. S.B. 273 establishes two unclassified positions, the Director of Collections and the Manager of Planning and Research.

Subcommittee discussion centered on how to facilitate review of the Department's Property Valuation Division (PVD) and Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Division and on how to deal with this problem when other cabinet agencies with many divisions are reviewed since time did not permit focusing on all areas of the Department. The Subcommittee focused primarily on data processing applications during its current review and did not have time to address the other concerns raised in the 1987 sunset report which had suggested future reviews of ABC and PVD. The Subcommittee addresses these concerns in its recommendations.

In 1988, two audits were requested, one dealing with Department of Revenue's computer operations and another with collection of taxes. The first audit examined two of the Department's major computer applications, the Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal System (CAMA) and the Vehicle Information Processing System (VIPS). The second audit examined the Department's delinquent tax collection process and whether recent changes within the agency, primarily the establishment of the new Division of Collections, would be sufficient to address its tax collection problems.

The Subcommittee has reviewed both Post Audit reports and believes that the Department under the current Secretary has made considerable progress in addressing its data processing and tax collections problems. The agency reported on its progress in developing the Business Tax Information Management System (BTIMS) computer software for handling sales tax, with implementation scheduled for June 1990. It was noted that work on the Kansas Business Integrated Tax System (K-BITS) computer software had been halted and that emphasis had shifted to implementing one tax instead of all business taxes. The agency also reported on the Automated Collections System (ACS) which is recommended by the Governor's Budget Report for acquisition in FY 1990. The Subcommittee notes that a procurement negotiating committee has been appointed and that the process is under way to acquire the ACS computer software and hardware by the end of next fiscal year to assist the Division of Collections.

Possible inclusion of an accounts receivable capability into ACS led the Subcommittee to review the Department of Administration's plans to implement the Kansas Financial Information System (KFIS) which also includes an accounts receivable capability. The Subcommittee was interested to determine how the Department of Revenue's plans were reviewed and considered by the Department of Administration, particularly since KSA 75-4705(d) gives DISC statutory responsibility to "...determine all data processing programs, contract services and new data processing positions needed by any division, department or agency of the state." The Subcommittee's interest was conditioned by the failure of K-BITS and information from Post Audit that at least two of the K-BITS contractors had failed to fulfill their contracts but were paid for unsatisfactory work. The DISC responsibility under KSA 75-4705(d) also includes "audits (which) shall be conducted annually covering data processing applications, systems developments and information processing facilities."

The Subcommittee is concerned that the Department of Revenue failed to submit its FY 1990 Information Technology (IT) Plan to the Division of Information Systems and Communications (DISC). The annually updated agency plan was due last fall. To date, the agency has not submitted the document. The Subcommittee toured DISC and reviewed its operations and interaction with the user agencies such as the Department of Revenue. The DISC Director indicated that the Secretary of Revenue had submitted a list of 38 high priority projects with supporting data and that the list would serve as the Department's IT Plan until the remainder of their planning document is assembled.

In this context, the Subcommittee notes that DISC was subjected to a 1984 sunset review but that the Department of Administration and all its other divisions were not and are not subject to review under the Sunset Law. DISC was removed from sunset review when it was reorganized in 1984. The Subcommittee discussed placing the Department of Administration and its divisions under the Sunset Law since all of the other cabinet agencies have been reviewed at least once pursuant to the Sunset Law and all cabinet agencies except the Department of Administration are scheduled for additional sunset reviews over the next eight years.

The Subcommittee feels that legislative oversight during the sunset review process helps both legislators and agency personnel better serve the public by the interchange of ideas and information. The Subcommittee appreciated the cordial reception it was afforded by the Secretary of Administration and the Director of DISC during its brief visit of the state's central telecommunications and computer center. However, since DISC was not the focus of the Subcommittee's sunset review during this current cycle, many questions about the DISC operation were not discussed.

The Subcommittee became aware during this sunset review of the Department of Revenue that for large cabinet agencies, much of the agency's operation cannot be examined during an annual review. The Subcommittee appreciates the work of the House Appropriations and Senate Ways and Means subcommittees which annually review the various agency budgets, including the data processing and telecommunications budgets. However, the Subcommittee believes that in-depth study of the state's computers and telecommunications technology should be undertaken in a variety of forums to assure more thorough legislative oversight of both existing and proposed new governmental information storage, transmission and processing technologies which appear to be quite expensive.

To that end, the Subcommittee offers a number of recommendations about the Department of Revenue and about the more general concerns involving sunset review and the state's use of computers, telecommunications and information technologies.

House Committee on Governmental Organization
Subcommittee Recommendations

As part of the its sunset review of the Department of Revenue, the Subcommittee examined data processing and tax collections. It did not have time to review ABC and PVD in this sunset cycle, but does not feel that any particular problems in these areas should require a short-term extension of the agency's abolition date to ensure review. Therefore, the Subcommittee makes the following recommendations:

1. Reestablish the Office of Secretary and Department of Revenue for six years, with sunset scheduled for July 1, 1995. For the Department of Revenue to provide the Legislature with followup reports in several areas:

- a. Division of Collections, 1990; 1991.
- b. Division of Property Valuation, 1991.
- c. Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control, 1990.
- d. Business Tax Information System (BTIMS), 1990; 1991.
- e. Automated Collections System (ACS), 1990; 1991.

In regard to the Subcommittee's review of data processing at the Department of Revenue, the Subcommittee surveyed DISC and feels that additional legislative oversight is needed regarding the state's use of computers, telecommunications and information technologies. Recommendations of a more general nature are offered by the Subcommittee. The rationale for these additional recommendations is found in the previous text of this report.

2. Introduce a bill to place the Department of Administration under provisions of the Kansas Sunset Act.

3. Introduce a bill to establish a new Joint Committee on Governmental Technology to monitor the state's computers, telecommunications, and information technologies.

4. Submit to the Legislative Coordinating Council a request for a Special Interim Committee to be appointed for the purpose of reviewing the Division of Information Systems and Communications during the 1989 Interim.

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SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Sunset Review for the Department of Revenue and Office of Secretary of Revenue



Representative Nancy Brown,
Subcommittee Chairperson



Representative Belle Borum



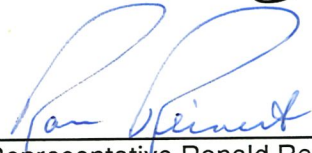
Representative Diane Gjerstad



Representative Clyde Graeber



Representative Al Ramirez



Representative Ronald Reinert



Representative Hank Turnbaugh

Testimony on
H.B. 2546
to the

House Governmental Organization Committee
March 27, 1989

The 1985 version of the State Water Plan contained three sub-sections on the subject of water conservation:

1. Municipal Water Conservation.
2. Agricultural Water Conservation.
3. Industrial Water Conservation.

The key policy recommendation contained in these sub-sections dealt with establishing the authority for the Chief Engineer to require development of water use efficiency plans by water right holders in accordance with guidelines to be prepared by the state.

In 1986, legislation was passed which partially implemented the recommendations contained in the State Water Plan. A decision was made by the legislature to authorize the state to require water conservation plans for anyone purchasing water from the state water marketing program; anyone participating in the new water assurance district program; and anyone obtaining a new water right. The important point here is that a policy decision was made to require conservation plans only on a prospective basis. The legislation did not authorize the Chief Engineer to place such requirements on existing water rights.

We have many examples of the need to conserve the water. At no time has it been more evident than it is right now. We are in

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the second year of a drought and it is essential we use our limited reserves in the most efficient way possible.

There are some excellent examples of existing water conservation programs. Some of the most notable of these include the City of Wichita and the City of Hays. In addition, many farmers involved in irrigation have been adopting more efficient practices due to economic incentives as well as the desire to use water more efficiently.

While I am pleased to be able to cite many examples where the right thing is being done, there are, unfortunately examples of where the wrong thing continues to be done.

There is not one good reason to waste a drop of water during times of shortage. The most effective method to conserve water during times of shortage is to be using it efficiently when it is plentiful.

Conservation is not a cure--it is a means of preventing or mitigating shortages. Consequently, conservation is something that should be practiced in times of plenty. For example, building codes that encourage installation of efficient plumbing fixtures will, over time, have the effect of reducing demand during times of shortage without extraordinary sacrifices. These are especially important in areas experiencing growth.

The right to use water carries with it the responsibility to use it prudently. Passage of H.B. 2546 would put this basic principle into practice. We urge its favorable consideration by this committee.

STATEMENT OF DAVID L. POPE
CHIEF ENGINEER-DIRECTOR
DIVISION OF WATER RESOURCES
KANSAS STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION
ON
HOUSE BILL 2546

On March 27, 1989

Chairman Walker and members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to appear in support of House Bill 2546 concerning the authorization for the Chief Engineer to require conservation plans on owners of existing water rights and permits.

House Bill 2546 would authorize the Chief Engineer to require the owner of an existing water right or permit to appropriate water to adopt and implement conservation plans and practices. Before I comment on the effect of this Bill, I would like to briefly review the existing State law concerning water conservation plans.

In the 1985 State Water Plan, the Kansas Water Authority recommended that "Legislative action will be needed to vest power in the Chief Engineer, Division of Water Resources, to require persons, municipalities or industries to prepare conservation plans. The Chief Engineer would be further empowered to review, approve and enforce such plans." The State Water Plan also recommended that the Attorney General be given broadened powers to enforce compliance, upon request of the Chief Engineer.

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In the 1986 Session, House Bill 2703 was introduced. One of the portions of the Bill was New Section 3.(a), which provided as follows, "The Chief Engineer may require the preparation of a conservation plan by a water user or users whenever: (1) An area plan, prepared and approved under the basin planning process of the State Water Plan, contains a recommendation to the Chief Engineer that the water user or users be required to prepare conservation plans; (2) an application for transfer of water pursuant to K.S.A. 82a-1501 et seq., and amendments thereto, is received; or (3) the chief engineer, upon investigation thereby, deems the preparation of a conservation plan to be in the public interest...."

The House Committee on Energy and Natural Resources ultimately authored a Substitute for House Bill 2703 that incorporated a "guideline" concept. Substitute for House Bill 2703 eventually became law with the following provisions:

- a. K.S.A. 82a-1311a(d), as amended, now provides that the Kansas Water Authority may require an applicant for a contract for the sale of water from the State's conservation water supply capacity to adopt and implement conservation plans and practices consistent with the Kansas Water Office guidelines;
- b. K.S.A. 82a-1503(b), as amended, provides that no water transfer shall be approved unless the applicant has adopted and implemented conservation plans and practices consistent with guidelines;
- c. K.S.A. 82a-1345(c), as amended, requires each member of a water assurance district to adopt conservation plans and practices consistent with the guidelines developed and maintained by the Kansas Water Office; and

- d. K.S.A. 82a-711 was amended to add subsection (d) which authorizes the Chief Engineer to require a new applicant for permit to appropriate water to adopt and implement conservation plans and practices. This authority only allows the Chief Engineer to prospectively require conservation plans and practices on applicants for new permits to appropriate water.
- e. K.S.A. 74-2608(c), as amended, requires that the Kansas Water Office develop and maintain guidelines for water conservation plans and practices with specific limits on what those guidelines could contain.
- f. K.S.A. 74-2622(c)(11), as amended, requires the Kansas Water Authority to approve such guidelines prior to adoption by the Kansas Water Office.

After the Bill was passed in 1986, the Kansas Water Office developed and adopted conservation planning guidelines which were subjected to extensive public review and approved by the Kansas Water Authority. The Division of Water Resources sought technical assistance from various entities such as groundwater management districts, county conservation districts and the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, to aid applicants in preparation of conservation plans, and developed the communications network and administrative procedures to carry out that portion of the Act affecting new applicants for permit to appropriate water.

On January 1, 1989, we began the formal implementation of Substitute for House Bill 2705 by requiring all new applicants to appropriate water for municipal, industrial and irrigation use, applicants for change in the type of use of an existing water right and applicants to increase the size of place of

use for irrigation by more than 25%, to adopt and implement conservation plans and practices consistent with guidelines developed by the Kansas Water Office. It is anticipated during calendar year 1989 that nearly 900 such conservation plans and practices will be required. Because the Division of Water Resources has had to implement Substitute for House Bill 2703 with existing staff, the additional requirement of a conservation plan has already caused some delays in the processing of new applications as a result of the additional workload.

Currently there is no express statutory authority requiring, or authorizing anyone to require, conservation plans on water users with existing water rights who are not in assurance districts or who do not apply for: (a) a new permit, (b) a change to an existing water right, (c) a water transfer or (d) a purchase of water from the Kansas Water Office. House Bill 2546 would fill that void in authority and implement the original recommendations of the Kansas Water Authority in the 1985 State Water Plan.

Because there are more than 30,000 active water rights in Kansas, it is not possible, nor even necessary, to require conservation plans on all of them. The Division of Water Resources has requested in its Fiscal Note, two professionals and a clerical person to implement the provisions of House Bill 2546. This level of funding will allow the Chief Engineer to target selected water right or permit holders for conservation plan requirements. Examples of water users that might be selected for the conservation plan requirements would be: (a) water users that share a common source of supply that would likely be insufficient during times of drought, such as a stream with a history of low flow during such times; (b) users in water-short areas, such as areas that have been fully appropriated or are within the boundaries of an intensive groundwater use

control area; or (c) water users who are inefficient or wasteful, such as a municipality whose system leakage appears to be far above normal.

The Division of Water Resources' plan to implement House Bill 2546 would be to target areas or groups of water users for the conservation plan requirement where a particular problem or need exists. The conservation requirements which the Chief Engineer can impose on a water user are limited by the water conservation guidelines which have been adopted by the Kansas Water Office, which serve as the "standard."

The level of implementation contemplated by the Division of Water Resources at the present time is far short of requiring conservation plans of all water users in the State of Kansas. If this is not what the Committee has in mind, we will need to rethink our Fiscal Note requirements.

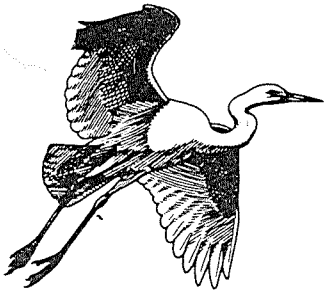
The additional staff requested by the Division of Water Resources will need to be able to coordinate with local, state and federal agencies who will be providing technical assistance, to review conservation plans that are submitted and determine whether they are sufficient to meet the guidelines adopted by the Kansas Water Office, work with water right and permit owners to bring their conservation plans into compliance with those guidelines, approve conservation plans and monitor compliance. These additional staff members are needed by the Division of Water Resources, not only for the manpower, but also to provide additional specialized areas of expertise. These new areas of expertise would primarily relate to water use efficiency by municipal users, industrial users and irrigators.

As a technical matter, to be consistent with existing authority to require conservation plans in K.S.A. 1988 Supp. 82a-711(d), lines 45-47 should read,

Prior to the approval of a conservation plan, the chief engineer, in consultation with the director of the Kansas Water Office if requested by the owner of the water right or permit, shall determine whether such plans and practices are consistent with the guidelines adopted by the Kansas Water Office.

I support passage of House Bill 2546 because it will implement the original recommendations of the Kansas Water Authority in the State Water Plan. I am particularly interested in your thoughts concerning the level of implementation you desire for House Bill 2546.

Thank you very much. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.



Kansas Audubon Council

House Bill 2546

March 27, 1989

House Governmental Organization Committee

My name is Joyce Wolf and I represent the 5000 Kansas members of the National Audubon Society who support the wise use and protection of our natural resources. Because of our members' strong commitment to the wise use of our natural resources, including water, we heartily support the new section of HB 2546 which permits the chief engineer to require the adoption and implementation of water conservation plans and practices.

In light of the severe weather conditions during 1988 and with the possibility for similar conditions for 1989, conservation of the state's water resources is a necessary and critical component to the wise management of Kansas' surface and ground water resources.

The Kansas Audubon Council urges the committee to vote yes on HB 2546.

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Kansas Natural Resource Council

Testimony before the House Government Organization Committee
HB 2546: concerning water conservation planning

Charlene A. Stinard, Kansas Natural Resource Council

March 27, 1989

My name is Charlene Stinard, and I appear today on behalf of the 700 members of the Kansas Natural Resource Council, a private, non-profit organization promoting sustainable resource policies for the state of Kansas.

HB 2546 will allow the chief engineer from the division of water resources at the state Board of Agriculture to require water rights holders to create and be prepared to implement water conservation plans. We support this measure as an important tool in resource management.

While there is a powerful ethic in Kansas against government interference, the prevailing drought conditions also highlight and heighten the need for water use planning. Comprehensive action to preserve and protect our precious water resources depends on our ability to promote planning and the implementation of water conservation practices.

We urge your support for HB 2546.

