



Date: February 1, 2024  
To: Chairman Jim Minnix, House Committee on Water  
From: Shahira Stafford, Kansas Cooperative Council  
**RE: Opponent Testimony on HB 2459**

Chairman Minnix and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing the Kansas Cooperative Council (Co-op Council) to submit comments in opposition to House Bill 2459. Formed in 1944, the Co-op Council is a voluntary trade association representing all forms of cooperatively structured business in Kansas. Our purpose is to further the understanding of cooperative principals, methods of doing business, and the impact co-ops have on our state's rural economy.

House Bill 2459 would amend the Kansas Water Appropriation Act by defining "safe yield" as the long-term sustainable yield of the source of water supply, including hydraulically connected surface water or groundwater. The bill would prohibit the change in a point of diversion in a water right if the safe yield of the source of water is exceeded.

The Co-op Council has serious concerns with the potential unintended consequences on our farmer owners' ability to replace old wells and responsibly ensure an adequate water supply for their operations. We would rather see more local efforts by groundwater management districts to prevent "water chasing" to over appropriated groundwater areas.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our concerns, and we respectfully ask that you not advance House Bill 2549 as it stands today.