



**House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources**  
**Dan Meyerhoff, Kansas Association of Conservation Districts**  
**Wednesday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025**  
**HB 2111 – Modifying the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)**

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Chairman Rahjes and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2111. The Kansas Association of Conservation Districts (KACD) represents the individual 105 conservation districts and 525 elected volunteer Supervisors that serve on those boards.

The mission statement of KACD and its member districts is “Providing local leadership to protect and improve Kansas Natural Resources through collaboration, education and implementation.” This collaboration frequently involves partnership with USDA and the Kansas Department of Agriculture to identify and solve unique local problems. As the front door for Kansas landowners and agricultural producers the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) offers a myriad of solutions to Kansas citizens as they seek to address resource concerns. The Kansas CREP program, a specific enhanced CRP, was developed nearly two decades ago to address water concerns in the Upper Ark River and Rattlesnake Creek basins. This program has been very successful in some of the most heavily over appropriated irrigated regions of the state. Through the life of the program nearly 50,000 acre-feet of annual water has been retired across 13 counties in southwest and central Kansas.

With the tremendous focus on water conservation in Kansas over the past decade and elimination of the “use it or lose it” legal philosophy surrounding water many users have voluntarily conserved water to the point where they no longer use enough water to qualify for CREP as it exists today. When combined with recent changes to the federal program that allow for dryland farming operations and limited use of water to establish permanent cover it is necessary for the State of Kansas to consider changes to our existing CREP statutes in order to fully realize the benefit of the program while balancing farm productivity and the need to address the long term water challenges facing the state.

We believe that the amendments recommended to CREP in HB 2111 as well as an expansion of the existing acreage limitation will provide a critical tool to help address local priorities, particularly in the Rattlesnake Creek basin above Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. KACD respectfully requests that the committee support HB 2111 by recommending it favorable for passage.