



Since 1894

Date: February 10, 2025

To: House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Rep. Ken Rahjes, Chair

From: Jackie Garagiola, Associate Counsel, Kansas Livestock Association

Re: **HB 2172 AN ACT concerning water; establishing the water program task force to evaluate the state's water program and funding for such program; requiring a report thereon to the legislature and the governor.**

Position: Proponent, In-Person

*The Kansas Livestock Association (KLA), formed in 1894, is a trade association representing nearly 5,700 members on legislative and regulatory issues. KLA members are involved in many aspects of the livestock industry, including seed stock, cow-calf, and stocker cattle production; cattle feeding; dairy production; swine production; grazing land management; and diversified farming operations.*

Thank you, Chairman Rahjes, and members of the Committee, for allowing the Kansas Livestock Association (KLA) the opportunity to share our views on HB 2172. KLA supports HB 2172 to fully establish a water program task force to evaluate the state's water program and its corresponding funding.

KLA policy supports this bill for three main reasons: 1) the development of a long range plan for water is important to ensuring the future of water in Kansas, 2) accountability for distribution and spending of funds designated for water is critical to measuring the success of these programs, and 3) this bill gives agriculture, which represents the largest number of water rights in Kansas, a seat at the table in the planning process.

KLA is supportive of the development of a long-range plan. As the state seeks to address the current and future water needs, it is important to set specific goals and metrics for reviewing the success of these endeavors. Further, we need to understand where these investments go and assess which are impactful versus which are utilizing this money with no measurable benefit. In our industry, stockwater fees fund a portion of state water programs, and it is important to our members to ensure these funds are being spent appropriately. KLA appreciates recent efforts to return some of those funds back to stockwater users to improve water saving technologies in participating facilities.

Lastly, section (a)(1) of HB 2172 requires that of the 29 voting members of the task force, at least several will be appointed by agricultural industry organizations, including KLA. It is critical that agriculture continues to have a voice in these ongoing efforts and KLA sincerely appreciates the ability to appoint a voting member to represent livestock producers' needs.

KLA appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony as a proponent of HB 2172. We ask that the Committee recommend the bill favorable for passage.