

Senate Substitute for HOUSE BILL No. 2172

By Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

3-18

1 AN ACT concerning water; establishing the water program task force to
2 evaluate the state's water program and funding for such program;
3 requiring the task force to establish a water planning working group
4 and submit a report to the legislature and the governor.

5
6 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:*

7 Section 1. (a) There is hereby established the water program task
8 force. The task force shall consist of the following 13 voting members:

9 (1) The chair of the house of representatives committee on water or
10 the chair's designee;

11 (2) the chair of the house of representatives committee on agriculture
12 and natural resources or the chair's designee;

13 (3) the chair of the senate committee on agriculture and natural
14 resources or the chair's designee;

15 (4) the ranking minority member of the house of representatives
16 committee on water or the ranking member's designee;

17 (5) the ranking minority member of the senate agriculture and natural
18 resources committee or the ranking member's designee;

19 (6) one member of the house of representatives who does not sit on
20 the committee on water or the committee on agriculture and natural
21 resources appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;

22 (7) one member of the senate who does not sit on the committee on
23 agriculture and natural resources appointed by the president of the senate;
24 and

25 (8) six Kansas residents jointly appointed by the speaker of the house
26 of representatives and the president of the senate.

27 (b) Each member of the task force who is not a member of the
28 legislature shall represent at least one of the following stakeholders:

29 (1) A Kansas employer with a vested water right;

30 (2) a commercial user of a municipal or industrial water right;

31 (3) an agricultural producer;

32 (4) an economic development organization;

33 (5) a water utility;

34 (6) a resident Kansas Indian tribe, Potawatomi, Kickapoo, Iowa or
35 Sac and Fox;

36 (7) a rural water district;

- 1 (8) a local conservation district;
- 2 (9) an organization that focuses on environmental or wildlife
3 protection or conservation;
- 4 (10) a local water management district;
- 5 (11) the Kansas agricultural banking or appraisal industry;
- 6 (12) a student at a state educational institution engaged in a course of
7 study related to water;
- 8 (13) a Kansas municipality;
- 9 (14) a provider of natural resources education;
- 10 (15) the Kansas agricultural commodity associations;
- 11 (16) the Kansas water authority or regional advisory committee;
- 12 (17) the Kansas livestock industry; or
- 13 (18) the Kansas grain and feed industry.

14 (c) (1) Members of the task force shall be residents of Kansas. The
15 task force shall consist of at least one member from each of the five
16 conservation regions of the state. Not more than two members of the task
17 force shall represent the same stakeholder enumerated in subsection (b).

18 (2) The speaker of the house of representatives and the president of
19 the senate shall ensure that the requirements of paragraph (1) are met.

20 (d) Members of the task force shall be appointed by April 30, 2025.
21 Any vacancy in the membership of the task force shall be filled by
22 appointment in the same manner prescribed by this section for the original
23 appointment.

24 (e) The speaker of the house of representatives shall select one
25 member of the task force who is a member of the house of representatives
26 to serve as co-chairperson of the task force. The president of the senate
27 shall select one member of the task force who is a member of the senate to
28 serve as co-chairperson of the task force.

29 (f) (1) The task force may meet at any time and at any place within
30 the state upon the call of either co-chairperson.

31 (2) A majority of voting members shall constitute a quorum of the
32 task force. All actions of the task force may be taken by a majority of
33 members present when there is a quorum.

34 (3) If approved by the legislative coordinating council, members of
35 the task force attending meetings authorized by the task force shall be paid
36 amounts for expenses, mileage and subsistence as provided in K.S.A. 75-
37 3223(e), and amendments thereto.

38 (4) The staff of the office of revisor of statutes, the legislative
39 research department and the division of legislative administrative services
40 shall provide such assistance as may be requested by the task force.

41 (g) The water program task force shall:

42 (1) Evaluate major risks to the quality and quantity of the state's
43 water supply, including any impact on current and future economic growth

1 and population stability;

2 (2) steps that the state must take to define and achieve a future supply
3 of water for Kansans; and

4 (3) evaluate current funding for water in the state and determine
5 whether such funding is sufficient to address the water issues included in
6 the state water plan, including the state's current and future water
7 infrastructure needs.

8 (h) The task force shall prepare and submit a report to the legislature
9 and the governor on or before January 31, 2026. Such report shall include
10 recommendations on:

11 (1) The water program's long-term structure to address the state's
12 current and future water needs, including, but not limited to:

13 (A) The roles and responsibilities of the state, municipalities and
14 regional entities;

15 (B) how the program's investments and successes should be
16 evaluated, including gathering any stakeholder input; and

17 (C) criteria to determine program investments, including geographic
18 diversity of such investments; and

19 (2) funding for the water program, including, but not limited to:

20 (A) New dedicated moneys or investments for the state water plan
21 fund;

22 (B) changes to any existing fees or moneys dedicated to the state
23 water plan fund; and

24 (C) any additional funding sources or tools necessary to ensure that
25 the financial resources are adequate to address the state's water issues.

26 (i) (1) On or before June 30, 2025, the co-chairs of the task force
27 shall jointly appoint five individuals to a water planning work group. Such
28 individuals may be members of the water program task force but are not
29 required to be members of the task force. The individuals shall be
30 attorneys, engineers, hydrologists, natural resource planners or others with
31 relevant experience with Kansas water issues.

32 (2) The work group shall meet regularly as may be necessary to
33 conduct a study of the state water resource planning act, K.S.A. 82a-901 et
34 seq., and amendments thereto, and develop draft legislation that proposes
35 modernization of such act. The work group shall work jointly with the task
36 force and consider recommendations made by the task force relating to

37 (A) How the state water plan is created;

38 (B) what the state water plan should prioritize;

39 (C) how the state water plan is implemented;

40 (D) how recommendations for state water plan appropriations are
41 made to the legislature;

42 (E) any future studies that might be undertaken; and

43 (F) any other related or relevant matters.

1 (3) If approved by the legislative coordinating council, members of
2 the work group shall be paid amounts for expenses, mileage and
3 subsistence as provided in K.S.A. 75-3223(e), and amendments thereto.

4 (4) The staff of the office of revisor of statutes, the legislative
5 research department and the division of legislative administrative services
6 shall provide such assistance as may be requested by the work group.

7 (5) Any state agency or entity that is involved in the management or
8 study of water in Kansas shall provide information and support to the work
9 group upon request.

10 (6) On the first day of the 2026 legislative session, the work group
11 shall present a report to the house of representatives committees on
12 agriculture and natural resources and water and the senate committee on
13 agriculture and natural resources or any successor committees.

14 (j) This section shall expire on July 1, 2027.

15 Sec. 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its
16 publication in the Kansas register.