

SESSION OF 2025

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2112

As Amended by House Committee on Water

Brief*

HB 2112 would add additional members to a public water supply advisory committee (advisory committee), require the Secretary of Health and Environment (Secretary) to submit an annual report to the Legislature, and make changes regarding the certification exams for operators of water supply systems and wastewater treatment facilities in the state.

Public Water Supply Advisory Committee

In continuing law, the advisory committee is charged with making recommendations for standards for on-site and classroom water treatment operator certification programs, among other things. The bill would add training, examinations, continuing education, and reciprocity to these standards for which the advisory committee could make recommendations.

The bill would add new members to the advisory committee:

- Two additional members appointed by the Secretary;
- One member that would be selected from three nominations submitted by the League of Kansas Municipalities; and

*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <https://klrd.gov/>

- One member that would be selected from three nominations submitted by Kansas Municipal Utilities.

Report to the Legislature

The bill would require the Secretary to provide a written report to the Legislature on or before February 1 of each year that would contain the following information:

- The number of operator examinations administered during the previous two calendar years; and
- The pass rates of these examinations, including the pass rates of each separate operator classification.

Examination Fee

The bill would remove the \$25 cap on the individual operator examination fee and state this fee could not exceed \$200 or the cost of an exam, whichever is less.

Statutory Repeal

The bill would also repeal KSA 65-4506, which allows for a correspondence course to attain certification for operations of water supply systems and wastewater treatment facilities, rather than classroom instruction, and its associated fee.

Background

The bill was introduced by the House Committee on Water at the request of Representative Pickert.

House Committee on Water

In the House Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by representatives of the American Water Works Association, Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), Kansas Municipal Utilities, and League of Kansas Municipalities. Proponents noted that expanding this program and testing will improve the quality of operators, education, and training. This bill also provides flexibility by removing capped fee restraints which has been in place since the 1970s.

Written-only proponent testimony was provided by the City Manager of Arkansas City, Water Resource Manager of Garden City, and a private citizen.

Opponent testimony was provided by a representative of the Kansas Rural Water Association. The opponent testimony proposed that a statutory advisory committee be established in place of this bill. This advisory committee would review the examination process for water operators as well as exam fees.

Written-only opponent testimony was provided by the Mayor of the City of Potwin, the Public Works Director of the City of Haven, and representatives of Melvern Public Wholesale Water Supply District #12 and Finney County Rural Water District #1.

No other testimony was provided.

The House Committee amended the bill to:

- Expand the topics upon which the advisory committee would make recommendations;
- Add four new members to the advisory committee;
- Require an annual written report from the Secretary to the Legislature regarding examinations;

- Add a cap on examination fees of \$200 and state the cap would be \$200 or the cost of an exam, whichever is less; and
- Make a technical amendment.

Fiscal Information

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget on the bill, as introduced, KDHE states that enactment of the bill would have a net zero fiscal effect on the agency.

There would be an increase in revenue to the agency's Water Program Management Fund as the agency would be allowed to charge the full cost of water and wastewater certification exams, but the increased revenue would be offset by expenditures for a third-party contractor for exam development and administration. The revenue and expense estimates for FY 2026 and FY 2027 total \$90,550 and were calculated using a three-year average of 871 exams and an exam cost of \$104.00 per exam. Prior to FY 2025, revenue for these exams was deposited into the State General Fund. The agency reports that the bill could also impact some local governments that elect to pay for operator exams.

Any fiscal effect associated with the bill is not reflected in *The FY 2026 Governor's Budget Report*.

Water; water supply systems; wastewater treatment facilities; certification; examination; public water supply advisory committee