

To: House Agriculture Committee, Representative Kyle Hoffman, Chairman

From: Kent Askren, Kansas Farm Bureau

Date: March 5, 2018

Re: Written Testimony in support of SB 194- concerning water, relating to GMDs user charges

Chairman Hoffman and members of the Committee, on behalf of Kansas Farm Bureau I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments today in support of SB 194. KFB is the state's largest general farm organization representing more than 30,000 farm and ranch families through our 105 county Farm Bureau associations.

KFB policy supports the Groundwater Management Districts (GMD) Act and the role local water users have in determining their own destiny. Through implementation of a management program, each GMD must address groundwater supply problems unique to their district.

This proposal would give GMD boards greater latitude to fund their management programs by increasing their water user revenue "cap", if needed. Annually, the GMD board submits a proposed budget for eligible votes to consider at a public hearing, prior to adopting their budget.

Irrigation water right holders already pay significantly higher property taxes based in part upon the amount of water they apply each year. While we are not seeking to increase this heavy burden, we understand there may be times GMD boards need greater latitude to generate revenue after seeking public input from their constituencies. Our policy supports such grassroots efforts to help manage the resource.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and we hope you will vote to favorably pass out SB 194