

**CORRECTED**  
*SESSION OF 2019*

**SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON HOUSE RESOLUTION  
NO. 6018**

As Recommended by House Committee on  
Agriculture

**Brief\***

HR 6018 makes several findings concerning contamination of the Arkansas River Basin (Basin) by naturally-occurring radiation-emitting radionuclides. Among the findings of this resolution:

- In each of the last two years, approximately 10 tons of uranium have been delivered in downstream river flows from Colorado to groundwater in Southwest Kansas. The affected region in Kansas includes Hamilton, Kearny and Finney counties;
- Affected communities in Colorado and Kansas require assistance to remedy decades of poor water quality, which continues to worsen;
- Federal standards on safe drinking water are intended to protect the health and safety of the public. Accordingly, it is within the interest of the federal government to partner with state and local water providers to develop remedies for the Basin;
- Without additional funding Kansas' affected communities cannot develop water management practices and necessary infrastructure to address the water quality concerns;

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\*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 <http://www.kslegislature.org>

- The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) has an established interest in providing alternative fresh water sources to portions of the affected Basin in Colorado. Currently, efforts are underway to accomplish this goal; and
- The BOR completed an Upper Arkansas River Basin Public Water Supply Alternatives Viability Analysis of Water Supply Alternatives for Hamilton, Kearny, and Finney counties in Kansas. The analysis addressed water quality and availability in the Basin and identified alternatives, including the regionalization of supply pipeline alternatives. However, such supply pipeline alternatives are largely unaffordable due to participants; inability to cover construction costs.

The resolution requests that the Kansas Congressional Delegation work with the U.S. Congress to provide the BOR with the funding and direction necessary to implement the measures identified in the BOR studies. These include, but are not limited to:

- Further compiling information on existing, usable sources, and project demands;
- Developing Basin tools, including scientifically defensible hydrologic and economic modeling tools;
- Completing system reliability and impact analyses to assess the current and future capability of existing natural and man-made infrastructure and operations to meet demands and useable water supply challenges;
- Identifying adaptation strategies to improve operations and infrastructure and to address current and future water availability and quality challenges in the Basin; and

- Developing recommendations to address the water quality challenges and to provide reliable, clean sources of drinking water in the affected areas of the Basin.

The resolution further requests that the Kansas Water Office, the Southwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 3, and other state and local partners in Kansas and Colorado work with the BOR to complete these tasks and to address the concerns regarding the contamination of the Arkansas River Basin.

The resolution also directs the Chief Clerk of the Kansas House of Representatives to send enrolled copies of this resolution to the following:

- Kansas Governor Laura Kelly;
- Each member of Kansas' Congressional Delegation;
- The Kansas Water Office;
- Southwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 3;
- The Arkansas River Compact Administration;
- The BOR; and
- The current U.S. Secretary of the Interior.

### **Background**

HR 6018 was introduced by the House Committee on Agriculture at the request of Representative Jennings.

In the House Committee on Agriculture hearing, Representative Jennings appeared in support of the

resolution. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Executive Director of Southwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 3. Written-only supporting testimony was provided by the Kansas Water Office.

No neutral or opponent testimony was provided.

The House Committee recommended the resolution be adopted.

***Related Legislation – 2019 SR 1729***

SR 1729 (2019), a resolution identical to HR 6018, was introduced in the Senate by Senator Doll. The resolution was adopted by the Senate on March 21, 2019.