

To: House Water Committee

From: Sarah Chenoweth, Management Intern

Date: February 15, 2022

RE: Testimony in Favor of Senate Bill 358

Thank you Chairman Highland and members of the Committee for affording the League of Kansas Municipalities the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 358.

This bill directly affects the ability of municipalities to cost-effectively fund vital water infrastructure projects. As proposed, SB 358 amends K.S.A. 65-163d's definition of "project" to allow for the utilization of funds from the Kansas Public Water Supply Loan Fund (KPWSLF) in financing projects related to the diversion or transportation of water acquired through a water transfer.

Since its establishment in 1994, the KPWSLF has provided vital low-interest loans for Kansas cities to repair, replace, and optimize their water infrastructure. Making water transfer projects eligible to receive this financing would ensure that Kansas cities continue to receive crucial assistance as they make decisions for the future of their communities.

As long-term water supplies in Kansas continue to suffer, both in quantity and quality, water transfer projects may become a necessary component in ensuring our citizens have access to clean and abundant drinking water. The ability of municipalities to acquire low-interest loans through the KPWSLF will benefit water customers living in areas where water transfer may be the only option for such access.

On behalf of our member cities, the League supports SB 358 and the removal of the restricted definition of "project" currently contained in K.S.A. 65-163d. The removal of this language would bring the statute in line with the mission and guiding principles of Kansas's Water Vision—state support for locally driven solutions to long-term water resource management.