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Testimony to Kansas Senate Ways & Means Committee

House Bill 2591

An Act repealing K.S.A. 2021 Supp. 55-193; concerning the state corporation commission; relating to certain fund transfers to the abandoned oil & gas well fund.

Edward P. Cross, President
Kansas Independent Oil & Gas Association

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Good morning Chair Billinger, Vice Chair Claeys, Ranking Minority Member Hawk and members of the committee. I am Edward Cross, President of the Kansas Independent Oil & Gas Association (KIOGA). KIOGA represents thousands of independent oil and natural gas explorers and producers, as well as allied service and supply companies. With nearly 3,000 members across the entire state, KIOGA is the lead state and national advocate for the Kansas independent oil and natural gas industry. I am responsible for public policy advocacy and interaction with external stakeholders including elected officials, regulators, governmental decision-makers, and community leaders. I am providing this proponent testimony on House Bill 2591 (HB 2591) and urge the committee to pass this technical clean-up bill as written.

Last year (2021), the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC) introduced legislation addressing the plugging of abandoned wells (HB 2022). KIOGA was supportive of the measure and helped advance the legislation. It was signed into law by Governor Kelly on April 9, 2021. However, some technical issues were discovered in the measure after it was signed into law. The issue stems from the 55-193 statute appearing in two separate bills at the same time with neither bill explicitly resolving the revision made by the other bill. The KCC cannot assign assumptions of legislative intent (i.e., whether the statute should be repealed as provided in HB 2022 or amended as provided in HB 2007). To remedy the situation, the KCC introduced HB 2591 as a technical cleanup bill that only repeals 55-193 as it was intended when the measure was passed last year. HB 2591 passed the House 112-0 on February 17th. KIOGA urges the committee to pass HB 2591 as written. Thank you.