

**TESTIMONY OR PRESENTATION INFORMATION  
FOR  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE**

Please send all testimony or presentations in pdf format 24 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting to [Debra.Heideman@house.ks.gov](mailto:Debra.Heideman@house.ks.gov)

Name of Conferee/Presenter \_\_\_\_\_

Agency represented \_\_\_\_\_

Bill # \_\_\_\_\_

- Proponent
- Opponent
- Neutral

Will your testimony be given:

- Oral In Person
- Oral Via WebEx
- Written Only

If you are presenting testimony via WebEx, you will need to be sent an invitation to join the meeting. Please provide your email address.

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If you are giving a presentation, please complete the following:

Name of your presentation \_\_\_\_\_

Do you need Audio/Video Equipment for your presentation? Please list.

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Thank you,

Debra Heideman, Local Government

Committee Assistant

Room 149-S, 785-296-7681

## **Testimony on House Bill 2493 House Committee on Local Government**

February 12, 2024

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am writing, on behalf of Consolidated Rural Water District #1, Leavenworth County, to express objection to House Bill 2493. It is our opinion that House Bill 2493 is not only unnecessary but will contribute to the wasteful spending of our limited public funds and furthermore, this bill leaves out many other water providers across the State of Kansas that do not fall under K.S.A. 82a-612 et seq.

Rural Water Districts in the State of Kansas, in most situations, operate with limited funding, and any additional expenses that will inevitably be caused by the proposed bill, will further limit the ability of Rural Water Districts to maintain and/or improve the infrastructure that provides the most valuable resource to many small communities, water.

Rural Water Districts' only funding source is user fees, and unlike cities and counties, Rural Water Districts do not have the ability to increase their funding through taxation of our customers. Many water systems struggle to maintain adequate funding through the user fees due to inflated cost of waterworks materials, and regulatory compliance requirements. Many projects that would provide the most basic of human needs (water) in our small communities, are simply not constructed due to the already burdensome "red tape". The cost of a seemingly simple water main project can incur costs of 30% to 40% for fees not related to the actual construction of the water main.

With the proposed House Bill 2493, the additional fees caused by the bidding requirement will in fact cause a significant number of water line projects in the State to not be constructed. The proposed bill will cause many projects to be studied, designed, bid, and inspected by an engineer licensed in the State of Kansas, in addition to the multitude of additional fees that could be more efficiently handled at the local level. If a water main project does get constructed if the proposed bill is approved, the only benefactor will be firms that provide engineering services. It is much more cost and time effective to have local contractors, retained by the local Rural Water Districts, construct a water line.

Many Rural Water Districts retain contractors through a competitive process. Contractors retained by water systems often already compete for contracts with a Water District, often arriving at fixed costs for the various types of work they are asked to perform. This is designed to ensure fairness, reliability and cost effectiveness.

Prior to passing of this bill, legislators should consult with their local water providers to learn more about processes already in place to ensure that public funds are being spent wisely.

Consolidated Rural Water District #1 respectfully asks the House Committee on Local Government let Rural Water Districts retain control of how/when projects are publicly bid.

Mike Fulkerson  
General Manager