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300 SW TENTH AVENUE ■ SUITE 24-E ■ TOPEKA, KS 66612 ■ (785) 296-2321

MEMORANDUM

To: House Committee on Water
From: Office of Revisor of Statutes
Date: February 13, 2024
Subject: Bill Brief – HB 2696

HB 2696 amends the Kansas Water Appropriation Act to allow a groundwater management district the opportunity to provide a written comment rather than a recommendation to the Chief Engineer for a proposed water conservation area and management plan.

HB 2696 specifically K.S.A. 82a-745, a statute that provides the procedures for water right owners to establish a water conservation area. As part of the process, before the Chief Engineer executes a consent agreement with the water right owners and issues an order designating an area as a water conservation area, the Chief Engineer is required to notify a GMD where the water rights and proposed WCA are located. Under current law, a GMD is allowed to provide a written recommendation to the Chief Engineer regarding the proposed WCA within 45 days. HB 2696 would amend K.S.A. 82a-745 to allow GMDs the opportunity to provide a written comment within that time period rather than a recommendation.

The bill becomes effective upon publication in the statute book.