



To: Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee

From: Stacy Barnes, Greensburg City Administrator

Date: March 10, 2023

RE: Proponent Testimony on HB 2302

Thank you Committee Chair Kerschen and Committee Members for this opportunity to provide written testimony as a proponent of HB 2302.

Water is a vital resource to the survival of our people, our cities, our economies and our great state. For municipalities, specifically small ones with limited resources, continuing to provide services to our communities can be a challenge. With aging infrastructure and continued regulatory requirements, it can be very costly for municipalities to take on much needed and/or required water infrastructure projects due to funding constraints. Raising taxes, rates, or taking on debt are generally what is needed to make projects happen and this can be very hard on municipal water customers and taxpayers.

As you know, water infrastructure projects are costly but essential to provide quality water to our communities. As a municipality, we pride ourselves on providing quality and reliable water, wastewater, and electric services to our community and at reasonable rates. However, as we plan for future infrastructure projects to continue to provide these quality services, the challenge is how to pay for them and not over burden our citizens. By establishing funds through the Kansas Water Office to grant to communities, this will allow us to have a funding partner to make much needed infrastructure projects happen, and will quite possibly make projects happen that wouldn't be possible without funding matching or grants.

This legislation would also provide funding for much needed technical assistance and capacity building for our small utilities. This helps communities to identify projects, have engineering done, and technical assistance for grants and grant management.



Another portion of HB 2302 that would be a tremendous resource to municipalities is the grants that can be applied to outstanding loan balances. In 2012, the City of Greensburg completed construction of a \$2.664 million water treatment facility with bond payments stretching into 2052. Construction of this facility ensures quality water for our citizens into the future, but also has saddled us with annual payments for many years to come. With assistance to sunset this debt early, it would free up financial resources for other water infrastructure projects in our city.

The passage of HB 2302 would provide a tremendous assistance to our municipalities, particularly the smaller ones, to make water-related infrastructure repairs to protect this vital resource in our communities. Thank you for this opportunity to provide this testimony and I am happy to answer questions if you'd like to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stacy Barnes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stacy Barnes

City Administrator

City of Greensburg

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