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**Testimony before the House Water Committee
Proponent on HB 2678
By
Vanessa Marks
On Behalf of Central Kansas Water Bank Association
February 08, 2024**

Chairman Minnix and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding HB 2678. I am Vanessa Marks, providing testimony on behalf of the Central Kansas Water Bank Association (CKWBA).

The Central Kansas Water Bank Association is a private, not-for-profit entity. It is the only active water bank in the state and is enacted within the water banking statutes. CKWBA promotes water conservation, the wise use of the groundwater resource in central Kansas and provides increased flexibility for water users. CKWBA is an open and responsive way the water users in the area can help with water conservation, maximize the value of the water in the region, and increase the water security in the Great Bend Prairie Aquifer.

The first modification requested to K.S.A 82a-763 will allow water users to deposit water in the bank for ten years, instead of just five. This change was suggested in the last CKWBA charter review by area water users and can provide for longer term planning on water investments. For example, depositing water that was previously used from the Quivira/Rattlesnake Creek area into the water bank and leased elsewhere, for ten years versus five, can potentially double the conservation efforts over time.

The second modification requested in HB 2678 is to clarify when a withdrawal is to be made by safe deposit account holders. In past years, CKWBA has required the account holder to come in and withdraw water from their safe deposit account before using any banked water. This requirement would cause the account holder to guess how much banked water would be used or needed. If more water is needed, then the account holder would have to make additional withdrawal(s) and make educated guess(es). The withdrawal of banked water before use is a big gamble for some water users. The proposed revision to K.S.A. 82a-763 will provide more flexibility to the account holder and more accurate information regarding how much water will be withdrawn from an account each year. Each withdrawal from an account also creates another term permit that needs to be filed with the Division of Water Resources, thus further increasing the workload at the Stafford field office.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 2678. I look forward to working with you and your committee to provide more flexibility to area water users and continuing water conservation within central Kansas.