



Since 1894

Date: February 13, 2024

To: House Committee on Water
Rep. Jim Minnix, Chair

From: Aaron M. Popelka, V.P. of Legal and Governmental Affairs, Kansas Livestock Association

Re: **HB 2696 AN ACT concerning water; relating to the Kansas water appropriation act; allowing 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.**

Position: Proponent, In-Person

The Kansas Livestock Association (KLA), formed in 1894, is a trade association representing more than 5,700 members on legislative and regulatory issues. KLA members are involved in many aspects of the livestock industry, including seed stock, cow-calf, and stocker cattle production; cattle feeding; dairy production; swine production; grazing land management; and diversified farming operations.

Thank you, Chairman Minnix, and members of the Committee, for allowing the Kansas Livestock Association (KLA) the opportunity to share our views on HB 2696. KLA supports the concept behind HB 2696 to streamline Groundwater Management District (GMD) review of Water Conservation Areas (WCAs).

The intent of HB 2696 appears to be to streamline GMD review of a proposed WCA. It is unclear whether replacing "recommendation" with the word "comment" would substantively change the review process. To the extent the word change would enable the chief engineer to review and approve a WCA more expeditiously, KLA would support the modification. In addition, KLA would suggest limiting the comment period to 30 days.

KLA appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony as a proponent of HB 2696 and asks that the Committee recommend the bill favorable for passage.