

Western Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 1
Katie Durham, District Manager
TESTIMONY OPPOSING HB 2695
February 20th, 2024

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Regarding HB 2695:

The Western Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 1 (GMD1) is opposing HB 2695, as it is currently written. The bill provides enhanced abilities for a group of eligible voters to petition to be excluded from a Groundwater Management District.

GMD1 currently has two LEMA's, the Wichita County Water Conservation Area (WCA), and several other small WCAs which have taken several years to formulate and implement successfully. Throughout this process there have instances where enhanced education, outreach and facilitated discussions were necessary in order to prevent misinformation and to gain momentum in developing these plans. During the first attempt to establish a LEMA back in 2013, there was a particular region of the District that was rather opposed to the plan and had there been a petition to leave the District it could have inadvertently caused harm to the overall GMD. However, years later after enhanced outreach and education focused on the need for programs such as LEMA's and WCA's this same region is mostly in strong favor of the current Four County LEMA, which can be seen as a testimony to the sociological change that can be seen overtime.

Therefore, for the reasons stated above, GMD1 is opposing HB 2695 as currently written.