



February 13, 2025

The Honorable Ken Rahjes
Chair
Committee on Agriculture &
Natural Resources
300 W. 10th St.
Topeka, KS 66612

The Honorable Lane Neelly
Vice Chair
Committee on Agriculture &
Natural Resources
300 W. 10th St.
Topeka, KS 66612

The Honorable Linda Featherston
Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture &
Natural Resources
300 W. 10th St.
Topeka, KS 66612

RE: House Bill 2114

Dear Representatives,

The Association of State Dam Safety Officials (ASDSO) writes to express our support for Kansas House Bill 2114. The proposed statutory changes outlined in this bill will help enhance dam safety protocols and support the ongoing efforts of the Kansas Department of Agriculture Division of Water Resources (KDA–DWR) in safeguarding dam infrastructure across the state, as well as continuing its commitment to ensuring the safety of downstream communities and property.

ASDSO is a national professional association whose membership includes the fifty state dam safety programs in addition to the territory of Puerto Rico—and over 3,000 other dam safety professionals and stakeholders from across the country. The association’s mission is to improve the condition and safety of dams and lower the risk of dam failures through education, support for state dam safety programs, and fostering a unified dam safety community.

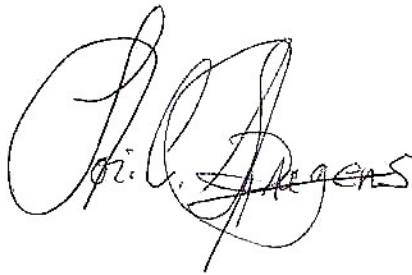
Kansas is home to over 6,000 dams—2,531 of which are regulated by the state. This includes over 300 high hazard potential dams. The potential consequences of dam failures are severe, and it is imperative that Kansas continues to strengthen its approach to dam inspections and maintenance and remain on par with other state dam safety programs.

We commend the Kansas Legislature on recognizing the need for improvement when it commissioned an evaluation of the Kansas dam safety program. This evaluation provided valuable recommendations, many of which are reflected in the provisions of HB 2114. ASDSO encourages Kansas to move toward all the recommendations in this report that were offered specifically for the state's characteristics and needs.

The bill addresses gaps in the inspection process, such as the lack of routine inspections for low-hazard potential dams. The bill's proposed inspection requirements for low-hazard potential dams, once every 10 years, will ensure that all dams are consistently monitored and that at-risk structures are identified and mitigated before posing a threat to public safety. The introduction of a civil penalty provision for non-compliance will give the KDA-DWR an additional enforcement tool to hold dam owners accountable, enhancing the program's effectiveness. Increasing the application fees for dam construction and modification projects based on project type and hazard potential classification to better reflect the amount of time and effort that goes into evaluating these applications will bring Kansas in line with other states and bring increased funding to KDA-DWR.

The Association of State Dam Safety Officials applauds the Kansas Legislature's leadership in advancing HB 2114 and urges its passage. This bill represents a proactive step toward ensuring that Kansas's dam safety program is aligned with national standards and continues to protect the people and property of Kansas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lori C. Spragens". The signature is stylized with large, flowing loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Lori C. Spragens
Executive Director