



133 W 8th St
PO Box 112
Russell KS 67665-0112
Phone: (785) 483-6311
Fax: (785) 483-4397

Testimony in Support of HB 2433
Proponent

Mr. Chair and members of the Committee,

My name is Jim Cross, and I serve as Mayor of the City of Russell. I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 2433.

HB 2433 is a clarifying measure that affirms counties cannot regulate the appropriation or transfer of water in a way that conflicts with, duplicates, or exceeds state law. This authority correctly belongs to the Chief Engineer and the Water Transfer Hearing Panel.

The process by which Kansas already governs water rights is thorough and should be the final authority on the regulatory process. It is imperative that communities have clarity on this matter to communicate a process that equates to finality.

Hays and Russell are significant economic contributors to the region. Local industrial progress and recruitment have stalled due to the inability to provide an adequate water supply. The current industry is often restricted based on conservation measures in place due to the existing water supply being susceptible to drought and contamination.

The Cities are committed to water conservation and have been the leading models for water conservation across the state for many years, but conservation has only served as a protection to our existing supply, not as a solution to supply inadequacy. Numerous alternative water supply solutions have been explored, resulting in the most feasible and economic opportunity being the joint development of the R9 Ranch. The Cities have complied with the State regulatory process and have received favorable rulings in doing so. Despite favorable rulings from the regulating authority, county zoning provisions have been adopted to supersede the State's ruling on the matter, preventing development of the project.

HB 2433 establishes the clarity needed to provide stability, consistency, predictability, and respect for Kansas's water governance structure.

I respectfully ask for your support of HB 2433. Thank you.

Jim A. Cross, Mayor
City of Russell