

**Russell, Kansas Business Community
Agrilead, Inc. – Proponent**

Letter of Support for HB 2433

Mr. Chair and members of the Committee,

My name is Jeff Ochampaugh, President of Agrilead, Inc. in Russell, KS. With this letter I am seeking your support House Bill 2433.

The cities of Hays and Russell have worked diligently and in full compliance with state requirements over decades to secure a sustainable water supply for the citizens and businesses of our communities. Further, the State has concluded that the proposed R-9 ranch project to supply water from Edwards County to our communities will not infringe the water rights of others and provides significant statewide benefit through support of our regional economy and substantial contribution of tax revenue to the state.

However, recent attempts to change the rules and regulations of water transfer at the local level in Edwards County now seeks to usurp State authority as set forth in the Water Appropriation Act, the Water Transfer Act, and the powder delegated by statute to the Chief Engineer and KDHE.

HB 2433 is important to make it clear water in Kansas is governed by the state while local communities maintain rights to regulate water for local domestic use along with authority locally to enact comprehensive zoning regulations within its statutory authority.

HB 2433 brings clarity to the state water governance and matters to business and industry development because it assures that once a project meets state water requirements, counties may not impose additional permits, conditions, or fees related to the transfer or appropriation of water.

If or when local government attempts to re-write previously established state laws and authority, we all lose solid ground for which to confidently live, work, and conduct business. HB 2433 further establishes solid ground for the governance of our state's most precious resource, and this brings needed predictability and understanding for significant long-term ventures like the R-9 ranch water transfer project for our communities of Hays and Russell.

For these reasons, I urge your support for HB 2433.

Thank you,



Jeff Ochampaugh – President
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