



Testimony Submitted to the
House Water Committee
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City of Wichita

Testimony in Support of HB 2462

Good morning Chairman Minnix, Vice-Chair White, Ranking Minority Member Vaughn and members of the House Water Committee. I am Gary Janzen, Director of Public Works & Utilities for the City of Wichita and I am here today to testify in support of HB 2462, a bill requiring rules and regulations to be completed on direct and indirect potable water reuse in Kansas.

The City of Wichita is the state's largest water utility, providing water for approximately 1/6 of the population of Kansas. We pride ourselves on being proactive about water availability for our citizens and the citizens of the communities we serve. Wichita has two primary water sources, Cheney Reservoir and the Equus Beds. The City of Wichita Public Works & Utilities has innovative programs in place for both sources – the Aquifer Storage and Recharge Project (ASR) in the Equus Beds, and investment in upstream best management practices to protect Cheney Reservoir.

As Wichita continues to grow and rainfall becomes more erratic and unpredictable, it is important that the City of Wichita have at its disposal all the tools possible to meet the current and future needs of the water consumers in south central Kansas. It is for this reason that we have begun exploring both direct and indirect potable reuse of water, similar to other cities and states in semi-arid regions of the country. While we can explore this as a possibility in the future, we cannot begin using direct or indirect potable reuse until the Kansas Department of Health and Environment promulgates rules and regulations for water reuse, which is the purpose behind this bill.

HB 2462 says that Kansas Department of Health and Environment must have rules and regulations on direct and indirect potable reuse of water by July 1, 2028. We believe the two year timeframe is sufficient to allow the Department time to build these regulations, though admittedly the timeframe is less important than the guarantee that they will be done. We need to be able to have these regulations on the books so that the City of Wichita or other communities in Kansas can explore water reuse as a possibility in the not-too-distant future.

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If passed, this bill would still only provide for the regulations for direct and indirect potable reuse of water – both options would remain voluntary for any communities that wanted to participate. No community would be mandated to begin direct and indirect potable reuse, and we appreciate that these options aren't right for every community and water provider.

These tools will be valuable for growing communities and regions like south central Kansas, and we see this as a way to continue to attract large industry to our region without stressing the overall demands on our municipal water system by the citizens we currently serve. We look forward to working with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the state of Kansas as we continue to search for methods to be better stewards of Kansas' most precious resource.

Thank you and I will stand for questions.

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