



Testimony Submitted to the
House Water Committee
February 6, 2024

Rodney Eggleston, Director of Public Works
City of Valley Center

Testimony in Support of HB 2633

I have held the position of Director of Public Works since July of 2018. Since then, I have tested for the level 4 Wastewater certification twice. Both testing times were held at the KRWA conference in Wichita in a room with approximately 100 other test takers sharing the room. This factor alone is a major distraction. Then the fact that the test is taken on paper creates another opportunity for error in grading.

I hold several IT network certifications that I obtained through previous employment. All these certifications were obtained through computer-based testing. Some of the first certifications were obtained in the mid-1990s. This type of testing allowed for more locations and testing dates to choose from. I was able to know my results immediately after completing the test.

Cities in the state of Kansas that operate a water or wastewater system are mandated to maintain the appropriate level of certification through the operators they employ. The system being employed for testing now is cumbersome and simply outdated.

The City of Valley Center supports **HB 2633**. Water and wastewater operators are in short supply, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to find and retain qualified operators. These certification exams are difficult and require a great deal of time and effort to obtain. The last thing we as a state need to do is make it more difficult by utilizing an outdated method of testing. We should also make every effort to see that the process is convenient as possible.

- Water and wastewater operator certification fees collected need to be deposited, in their entirety, into the water program management fund. The administrators of the certification program need to be given the authority to set testing fees accordingly to cover the cost to enable utilizing current, relevant, and standardized technology-based exams.
- The current \$25 cap on the examination fee needs to be lifted to set fees needed to cover a more efficient method of certification. It is critical these fees be in the proper fund for dedicated use benefiting the operator certification program, in turn, benefiting the operators, utilities, and customers of every public water and wastewater utility in the state.

Thank you for considering my comments on this critical measure.

Sincerely,
Rodney Eggleston
Director of Public Works
Valley Center, Kansas

Rodney Eggleston
Director of Public Works