



Testimony in Support of Senate Bills 548 and 549

Presented by City Manager, Ty Lasher

City of Bel Aire, Kansas

March 10, 2022

Chairman and Members of the Committee,

I am writing you on behalf of the City of Bel Aire requesting your support of **Senate Bills 548 and 549**. The City wholeheartedly agrees with our fellow stakeholders; REAP, Kansas Municipal Utilities, other municipal governments, and area chambers on this issue.

Water is one of the largest and most critical resources cities provide. These bills will provide the changes we need to better provide water resources to our residents and represent our customers in our Groundwater Management district, thus creating efficiencies across the region.

We echo the concerns of our colleagues in Hutchinson, " This voting power imbalance has been a cause for concern within Equus Beds GMD2, where irrigation water-right holders control more than 85% of eligible votes, while municipal water-right holders representing South-Central Kansas cities that provide water to more than 550,000 people have only 5% of eligible votes. Whether intentional or not, an electorate so designated is, and will always be, handicapped in favor of irrigation interests."

Please support bill SB 548 and SB 549, addressing the inequities in the management and stewardship of this important public resource. These bills move Kansas towards protecting the local investments in water resources that our municipal customers depend on.

Respectfully,

Ty Lasher

City Manager
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